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Christian Baptism

REV. ANDREAS WIBERG.

# CHRISTIAN BAPTISM:

SET FORTH IN

## THE WORDS OF THE BIBLE.

BY

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SWEDEN.

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"WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?"—Romans iv. 2.

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This interesting book is affectionately dedicated, by  
the Publication Society, to CHARLES T. GOODWIN, Esq.,  
New York City, by whose liberality it has been stereo-  
typed, and thus perpetuated.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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WE take peculiar pleasure in introducing the following treatise to the attention of the Christian public ; and this for several reasons.

The first is found in the position and character of its Author. It has been found by experience for the last two hundred years, that the most interesting and the most effective works on the Baptismal Controversy are those which are put forth by men whose own personal convictions have been the fruit, not of custom and education, but of fresh, earnest, and original examination ; especially of those who have been led by the force of truth to change their opinions, and to make serious sacrifices for the truth's sake. The names of Tombes, Booth, M'Lean, Carson, Noel, Pengilly, Baldwin, Judson, Chapin, Remington, and others, will readily occur to the reader's mind as examples.

And it seems perfectly natural that it should be so. We all feel a special interest in a book, in which a man professes to give us the reasons of a great practical change of convictions on any subject, particularly if it appear to be a matter of conscience with him. His example of obedience to conscience carries with it the

force of an argument of the strongest kind ; for we presume him to be convinced of the importance of the point at issue to a degree which no advocate of hereditary opinions can be supposed to feel ; to be better acquainted with the evidence and the arguments on both sides of the question, and if himself a good man, to have weighed them more deliberately and exactly in the sight of God. We are more easily persuaded of his independence of mind, from the fact that he has risen above the natural prejudices of his education, connections, and position in life ; and if it appears that this independence of human authority is intimately associated with a strong and filial dependence upon Divine teaching, such as is promised in the Scriptures to the earnest inquiry and meek simplicity of faith, we cannot but profoundly reverence such a spirit, and believe that God has really guided him in his new and better judgment. It is no longer the mere attraction of high learning, linked logic, or brilliant rhetoric, that draws us on in the perusal of his book ; but it is the vital fellowship of the heart in the holiness of truth, in the sanctity of conscience, in the love of Christ and his commandments.

Now all this is eminently true in the case of the author before us. Those who have enjoyed the opportunity of acquaintance with him in his native land, or in this country, will need no other proof. Those who have never had that advantage, will soon be satisfied of its truth in perusing the book itself.

Mr. Wiberg was born in Sweden, and brought up a strict Lutheran. He was educated at the University of Upsala, ordained to the ministry, and settled as a Lutheran pastor of the Established Church. Here he quietly pursued his studies and labors for several years ; but one day, after the Confirmation of over thirty young persons, he was disturbed by the reflection that only two of the whole number about to be admitted to the Lord's table gave evidence of conversion. Oppressed with the sense of his responsibility, he resigned his position as a pastor, repaired to Stockholm, and there engaged as Editor of an evangelical journal, and translated several works of Luther and Arndt from the German into Swedish. The subject of baptism exciting some attention, in consequence of the conversion of Rev. F. O. Nilsson to Baptist views, and the banishment of himself and flock, Mr. Wiberg thought it his duty to defend Pedobaptism ; and did so in his journal at Stockholm, and also personally against Mr. Oncken and Koebner at Hamburg, when on a visit to that city.

Once embarked in the investigation, however, after his return to Stockholm, he conscientiously sought to ascertain the will of God from his word. The result of this study took him by surprise. Not without much sorrow and inward struggle was he brought to feel convinced of the unsoundness of his early views and practice on baptism, and to confront the serious consequences of a change. Sweden, of all countries in Europe, is, perhaps, the most exclusive and intolerant

in its attachment to Lutheranism. Any form of dissent or opposition to the Church Establishment is, to this day, visited by heavy legal penalties, fines, imprisonment, or banishment. He knew what Mr. Nilsson had suffered before him, and what he might expect if he was baptized; but casting himself on Christ for life and death, Mr. Wiberg resolved to give up all for his sake. A sea-voyage being recommended for his health, and there being no Baptist minister in Sweden to administer that ordinance, he set sail for the United States. On his way he was baptized by the banished Nilsson at Copenhagen.

He arrived in this country late in 1852, a total stranger, and scarcely able to speak the English language, though he could read and write it. He found friends among his Baptist brethren, who were charmed with his deep piety and simplicity of manners. He was employed by the American Baptist Publication Society, first as a Colporteur, and then as a Translator. Here he composed also the following treatise on Baptism and Communion, in which he gives the result of his patient and prayerful examination, the grounds of his self-denying change of conviction. The Society at length appointed him Superintendent of Colportage in Sweden, to which country he returned soon after his book was published in the Swedish language. He left behind him the MS. in English, which is now offered to the public. Though not free from foreign idioms, it is thought best to publish it as he left it.

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If we are not mistaken, this is the first book giving to the public the reasons for a change of conviction from the Lutheran to a Baptist point of view. It has therefore a peculiar value for circulation among the large and increasing Lutheran population in this country.

Another source of pleasure in commending this treatise to the American public, is the great success which has already attended its circulation in Sweden within the last four years. Thousands of copies in the Swedish language have been demanded there. It has excited the attention of men of all classes, peasants, burghers, nobles, clergymen, statesmen, representatives in the Swedish Diet, and editors of the public journals, both secular and religious. It has encountered great, and sometimes bitter opposition. Within two weeks of his landing at Stockholm, the author was challenged to defend it in public debate, and one of the largest churches in the capital was opened for the occasion. He met the challenge in Christian meekness, and as the discussion went on day after day, the most powerful champions of Pedobaptism were found unable to resist the wisdom and spirit with which he spoke. When the discussion was closed, they regretted that it was ever begun, as the daily reports of the public prints had spread the principles of the Baptists through the kingdom. Persecution has since been resorted to again and again to suppress them, but in vain. The book is still in demand, the character of its author is respected more and more, the power of its scriptural


principles is still spreading, and Baptist churches are springing up in every part of Sweden. Already they number ninety-four, with over five thousand communicants. A history of this work of grace is just issued by our Society.

Our last reason for rejoicing in the appearance of this book in our own language and country, is found in the character of the book itself. Its spirit is excellent. Its method is the true inductive method, by which modern science has made the profoundest truths of nature its own. Its compass is sufficient to comprehend the entire subject of inquiry, to exhaust the evidence on both sides, and to conduct the reader to a satisfactory conclusion by putting him in possession of the whole argument. Its style is simple, lucid, and vigorous; remarkably so, we think, considering the author's recent acquaintance with our language. Its learning is ample, thorough, and exact. It adduces new testimonies from Pedobaptist concessions not yet generally known in this country. Mr. Wiberg slights no objection, for his own reason and conscience had not lightly come to Baptist conclusions. He reasons cautiously and clearly, to reach the solid ground of truth, and to manifest it to the conviction of his readers in the sight of God.

We especially invite to the book the attention of our Evangelical Lutheran brethren. It is worthy of circulation and success everywhere, for it is full of the truth and spirit of Christ.

J. N. B.





## PART I.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE CONCERNING CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

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#### SECTION I.

##### BAPTISM BEFORE THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

*The Divine Mission of John the Baptist.*—The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Mark i. 1. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. John i. 6. As it is written in the prophets; Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. Mark i. 2. And this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight. Matt. iii. 3. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Luke i. 16, 17. Now, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias,

in the wilderness. Luke iii. 2. That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore I am come baptizing with [in]\* water. He that sent me to baptize with [in] water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God. John i. 31-34.

*The Preaching of John the Baptist.*—In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea. And saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matt. iii. 1, 2. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Luke iii. 3. John preached the baptism of repentance to the people of Israel. Acts xiii. 24. Saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. Acts xix. 4. When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root

\* Words thus placed within brackets are corrections made in accordance with the original.

of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with [in] water, unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with [in] the Holy Ghost and fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge his floor and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff in unquenchable fire. Matt. iii. 7-12. Compare Mark i. 4-8; Luke iii. 3-18; and John i. 25-28.

*John's Baptism.*—And there went out unto him all the land of Judea and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. Mark i. 5. Compare Matt. iii. 5, 6.

John truly baptized you with [in] water; but ye shall be baptized with [in] the Holy Ghost not many days hence. Acts i. 5. Wherefore, of these men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection. Acts i. 22. That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached. Acts x. 37. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with

[in] water ; but ye shall be baptized with [in] the Holy Ghost. Acts xi. 16. He (Apollos) spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. Acts xviii. 25.

*The Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ.*—Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now : for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water : and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him : And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matt. iii. 13–17.

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him. And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Mark i. 9–11. Compare Luke iii. 21, 22 ; John i. 28–34.

*Christ baptizing, by his Disciples, in Judea, and*

*John baptizing, at the same time, in Ænon.*—After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and He tarried with them and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews, about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John iii. 22–26.

When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John—though Jesus himself baptized not, but His disciples—He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. John iv. 1, 2. And (He) went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized. And many believed on him there. John x. 40, 42.

*References of Jesus Christ to John—His Baptism and Success.*—And when the messengers of John were departed, He began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Luke vii. 24–27. Verily, I say

unto you, among them that are born of women, there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist : notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Matt. xi. 11, 12. The law and the prophets were until John : since that time the kingdom of God is announced by the Gospel,\* and every man presseth into it. Luke xvi. 16.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will ask you one question. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men ? Answer me. Mark xi. 29, 30. Compare Matt. xxi. 24-27 ; Luke xx. 3-8.

And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. Luke vii. 29, 30.

#### REMARKS.

John's baptism was either under the law or under the gospel dispensation. If under the former, we should expect that the law required it. But where can such a requirement be found in the law ?

That John's baptism did not belong to the Old

\* Thus according to the original.

Testament, but to the New, we understand from the following reasons :

1. *Our Saviour himself teaches that the New Testament Dispensation began with John*, saying, "The law and the prophets were until John ; since that time the kingdom of God is announced by the gospel, and every man presseth into it." "From the days of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

By "the kingdom of God" and "the kingdom of heaven," we have here to understand *the kingdom of Christ*, or the New Testament dispensation. This kingdom began just where the law and the prophets ended. "The law and the prophets were *until John* ;" but *with him* began "the kingdom of heaven," which, from that point of time, was announced, not through dark prophecies, but "through the gospel." And in this new state of things "the kingdom of heaven suffered violence ;" that is, the gospel, preached by John, our Saviour and his disciples, was received by the people with an unprecedented eagerness, and with a faith that forced them, for Christ's sake, to forsake all things, and commence an entirely new life. Had the ministry of John not been *within* the New Testament dispensation, or "the kingdom of heaven," how could this kingdom be said to have suffered violence "*from his day*?"

2. *John's baptism was sanctioned by our Saviour*



*as a New Testament ordinance, being himself baptized by John.* It is evident that our Saviour, by submitting himself to the baptism of John, would honor and sanction both baptism in general, and especially the baptism of John, as an important divine institution belonging to the New Testament dispensation. Some believe that the baptism of Jesus himself had nothing to do with the Christian ordinance, supposing that he was baptized as a priest. But this is an error. Christ could not be baptized as a Jewish priest, for he did not belong to the tribe consecrated to the priesthood. In Heb. vii. 14, Paul says, "It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood." And again, in Heb. viii. 4, "If He were on earth, he should not be a priest"—he could not be a Jewish priest. Of course, no statute of the Mosaic law touched the priesthood of Christ, who "pertained to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance to the altar." Heb. viii. 13. Christ's baptism, therefore, could not be a Jewish ordinance. Indeed, we must have a far stronger evidence that Christ's baptism did not belong to the New Dispensation, before we part with the consoling conviction that we are baptized with the same baptism as our Lord and Saviour himself.

3. *John's baptism was identified with that baptism which Christ, through his disciples, himself gave.* For John still continued to baptize after he

had been informed that Jesus baptized ; which the Scriptures relate in an approving way : John iii. 22-26 ; iv. 1. But this would have been to preach *two different baptisms* as binding *during the same time*, if John's baptism had not been the same as that of Jesus. And in what an awkward dilemma would that have placed the scrupulous Jews, who, in a sense of their sins, desired to be baptized ? Could we charge the God of infinite wisdom with being the author of such a confusion ?

4. *John's baptism was the same with that of the Apostles*, even in regard to the doctrine and faith whereunto he baptized. For it reads, Mark i. 4, that John "preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins"—the same terms which are used to describe the baptism of the Apostles, Acts ii. 38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins." John said to the people that they should believe on Jesus Christ, and exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world : " the same was in substance the preaching of the Apostles.

This doctrine is not at variance with that utterance of John, "I have baptized you with [in] water ; but He shall baptize you with [in] the Holy Ghost." For in those words John does not compare his water baptism with water baptism when given by Christ, who never baptized any one in water. John iv. 2. Neither does he compare his own baptism with that of the Apostles : but he

compares his own person and ministry with the person and office of Christ. He could only perform the external act of baptizing in water, but could not give the Spirit, whom He alone could give who should come after him. In the same way Paul also speaks, saying, "I have planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increase. So, then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.

Nor is this doctrine at variance with these words of Christ: "He that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." For this phrase does not imply that John was entirely excluded from that kingdom. "The kingdom of heaven" was at his time already *present*; for at this very time, it "suffered violence, and the violent took it by force." But it was also a *future* kingdom, inasmuch as it had not yet been manifested in its more mature state. As such it came "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" at the day of Pentecost, when the Apostles were reminded of all those things which Christ had taught them, which they had not then fully comprehended, but which now were revealed unto them in their spiritual sense. Before that time Peter could not agree to the doctrine of the sufferings and death of Christ in the stead of sinners; but on this occasion he preached, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, the glorious doctrine of the atonement of Christ in all its clearness. In

the same way John, though "greater than all the prophets" as to the dignity of his ministry, yet was less than the least of the followers of Christ after the day of Pentecost, in the degree of his spiritual knowledge of Divine truth. John's knowledge of "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," as well as his preaching and baptism, were in a state of childhood; but thence it does not follow, that he, with all his work, did not belong to the New Testament.

It does not disagree with this doctrine, that the baptism which John performed is usually mentioned under some special epithet, as "John's baptism," or "the baptism of repentance." For the true reason why this baptism is called "John's baptism," is that it was the baptism which John, on the immediate command of God (Luke iii. 2; John i. 33), first *introduced*. It was a *new* rite; and that a new institution should be designated by certain descriptive epithets, is perfectly natural. Again, the reason why it was called "the baptism of repentance," is that he required repentance of every candidate for baptism. But he was not only a preacher of repentance; he preached also, like the Apostles, forgiveness of sin through faith on Christ. Mark i. 4; Acts xix. 4.

Some object, not only against the baptism of John, but also against that administered under the ministry of Christ himself, through his disciples, that it cannot be valid Christian baptism, since it

was instituted before the resurrection of Christ, and, consequently, previous to the introduction of the New Testament dispensation. To this we answer: If the New Testament dispensation did not begin until after the resurrection of Christ, and baptism administered before this point of time was not valid as a Christian baptism, then the Lord's Supper cannot be valid as a Christian ordinance, as that also was instituted *previous* to the death and resurrection of Christ. Thence it follows, either that Christian baptism was instituted already *before* the resurrection of Christ, or that the Lord's Supper must have been instituted *after* the resurrection of Christ, in order that the two ordinances might have equal validity as *Christian* institutions.

Finally, it may be observed that the commission of Christ concerning baptism, recorded in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, did not annul the baptism of John and the disciples of Christ previous to Pentecost. For the fact that Jesus, previous to his resurrection, commanded his disciples to baptize (John iii. 22, 26; iv. 1, 2), shows that the commission which he afterward, at his Ascension, gave to his Apostles, was only a repetition and enlargement of his former commandment. The baptism of John, and of Christ himself, by his disciples, was to be restricted to "the house of Israel" (Matt. x. 5, 6); but the commission extends it to "all nations." The express commandment to baptize "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,"

cannot invalidate the baptism of John and the disciples of Christ. For suppose that neither John nor the disciples of Christ did baptize into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, yet they, undoubtedly, baptized into the faith of the Sacred Trinity. See, concerning John, Matt. iii. 11, 16, 17; Mark i. 7, 8; Luke iii. 22; John i. 32-34—from which passages it is evident that John himself both knew and witnessed to his hearers of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Indeed, we have in the New Testament no single instance recorded where this *whole* name was repeated at baptism. On the other hand, we meet with the simple expressions, “to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus,” “to be baptized into Christ,” etc. See Acts viii. 16, ii. 38, xix. 5; Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27. Now, if the baptism of John is not a Christian baptism, because he is not *recorded* to have baptized into the name of the Trinity, then no baptism which the New Testament *records* is a Christian baptism.

Now, when it is proved that both John’s baptism and the previous baptism administered by the disciples of Christ, were in substance the same with that baptism administered after the resurrection of Christ, it follows that these previous baptisms, in regard to the character of the subjects, and also in regard to the mode, are an example to all believers, binding upon them in all times. We may still say



with our Lord, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

The persons whom John baptized are designated by the Holy Spirit in few words: "They came from all the land of Judea, and were all baptized by him, *confessing their sins*." As this is *all* that is said of them, and it is said of *them all*; and as John at the same time rejected impenitent Pharisees and Sadducees from his baptism, and exhorted them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, it follows that he baptized *none but those whom he considered as true penitents*.

Further, as the baptism of John was a *baptism of repentance*, that is, a baptism which required repentance, and likewise a baptism wherein the candidates confessed their sins, he could in no wise have baptized infants, because they neither are able to *repent* nor to *confess their sins*.

John not only required a confession of repentance, and a state of mind which testified the genuineness of repentance in the candidates, but added further, as though with an express design to remove from their minds all idea of the ordinance of baptism being connected with hereditary qualifications, "Begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." John means to teach us, by this declaration, that, as circumcision belonged to the whole carnal Israel, so baptism belongs only to



spiritual Israelites, who "walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham," and not to the whole of so-called Christendom.

If it be objected, "Those to whom John spoke were adults," we answer, let it be so. Yet the words of John show, at all events, that the *nature* of the Christian church is not the same with that of the congregation of Israel in the Old Testament. The Pharisees *were* members of the congregation of the Old Testament by mere virtue of carnal descent from Abraham; but they *could not become* members of the church of Christ without repentance and faith. Therefore, it appears, from the *nature* of the church of Christ compared with that of the Jewish congregation of the Old Testament, that the law regarding admission to that church is not the *same* with that law which prescribed that all the male descendants of Abraham should be received among the covenant people of the Old Testament by means of circumcision.

It is to be observed that Christ did not *make disciples by baptizing*. To *make disciples*, and to *baptize*, are plainly represented as different actions: for "*Jesus made more disciples than John*," though he *baptized not* any of them with his own hands. It deserves also special attention, that the process of *making disciples* was *first* in order, and then *baptism*: for Jesus "*made and baptized disciples*." See John iv. 1, 2. As this is all the Evangelists have recorded respecting the baptism

of Christ during all his life, this is, consequently, *all* in which the practice of Christ is given for the guidance of his people. Therefore, whatsoever may be said in favor of infant baptism, it is evident that it has no *authority from our Saviour's own example*.

The fact that our Saviour, as did John, first *made* disciples, and then *baptized* them, entirely overthrows the position often taken by Pedobaptists, that there was no necessity for Christ to give his Apostles any *special command to baptize infants*, because, as Jews, they had always been accustomed to see children received into the Jewish community both by circumcision and by the Jewish proselyte baptism. For it is clear that as they had, as *Jews*, been accustomed to see both adults and children received into the Jewish community *by means of circumcision*, so now they were, in the *new state of things* which commenced by the preaching and baptism of John the Baptist, accustomed to see *only such* received into the visible kingdom of Christ, *by means of baptism*, as *repented and believed in Christ*, and had thus previously *been made disciples*. And as to the Jewish proselyte baptism, from that nothing can be inferred in regard to Christian baptism.

There is no evidence that the Jewish proselyte baptism existed in the time of Christ. Some believe that this baptism among the Jews did not originate until the *seventh* century after Christ;

at any rate, all learned and candid Pedobaptists in our time acknowledge that the existence of a proselyte baptism in the time of Christ cannot be proved. We need only quote the testimony of the world-renowned Church historian, Dr. A. NEANDER. He says :

“ Since the elaborate work of Schneckenberger\* has appeared, no one will pretend that he can prove the existence of proselyte baptism in the time of Christ.”†

That which has been called proselyte baptism was *essentially different* from Christian baptism. It was nothing more than one of the many self-immersions and ablutions commanded in the law, and magnified by superstition into a distinct rite. The Jewish proselytes *immersed themselves*. And though both adults and children performed it, where parents were admitted into the Jewish community, yet *none of the descendants* of such parents afterwards used it. In all these respects it was unlike Christian baptism, and therefore could not be the pattern of it.‡

\* “ Ueber das Alter der Jüdischen Proselytentaufe.”

† In Neander’s Lectures.

‡ To this we add the following remarks from a Baptist author :

“ 1. He who gave the commission, *Go ye, therefore, make all nations disciples, baptizing them*, etc., was a Jew, who had been himself circumcised in infancy, but baptized in manhood, and who therefore did not regard circumcision and baptism as signifying the same thing.

It is said, that "all the people," and especially "the Publicans," who heard John, "justified God," that is, gave their cordial assent to the method of God in his ministry and baptism, and, to testify it, "were baptized with the baptism of John;" while they who had a higher renown of piety, viz., "the Pharisees and the lawyers, *rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.*"

"2. Those who received the commission were Jews, who had themselves been in like manner circumcised in infancy, but baptized in manhood, on their own personal profession of repentance and faith in the approaching Messiah; and who had for a long time been actually employed by that Messiah himself in making and baptizing disciples among Jews who had been already circumcised, John iv. 1, 2. The work assigned them in this commission was precisely the same as they had been employed in, except that it was now extended to all nations, embraced new facts and discoveries concerning the way of salvation, and had the promise of superior aids and qualifications from on high. How was it possible, then, for them to think of the law of *circumcision*, or the custom of *proselyte baptism* (supposing it then existed), as suggesting the proper interpretation of the law of Christian baptism? The supposition is to the last degree improbable. Their *past practice* was the natural, and the only natural, mode of understanding their present commission. In their own nation they had already, under the eye and authority of the Lord, *made disciples* and *baptized* them; they were now to do the same among *all nations*; *teaching them also, to observe all things whatsoever their Lord had commanded them.* . . . The baptism of infants, so far from being implied in the circumstances of Christ and his Apostles when this commission was given, appears to be more decisively excluded by those very circumstances."—"Baptismal Balance." By J. Newton Brown. Philadelphia, 1853; pp. 30, 31.

Our Saviour here clearly intimates, that baptism is a part of "the counsel of God," and that, so far as men neglect baptism, so far do they *contemn and reject the will and counsel of God concerning themselves*.

If John, who was only a man, was to be esteemed so highly, and his baptism be received so unconditionally as "the counsel of God," that our Saviour expressed His great displeasure with them who neglected it; how much more do they incur the displeasure of God, who neglect this holy ordinance in the still more solemn form in which we soon shall find it prescribed by Him whose name is written "KING of Kings and LORD of Lords!" Rev. xix. 16. Surely we may say: "If they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven?" Heb. xii. 25.

Respecting the *mode* in which baptism was administered by John the Baptist and the disciples of Christ, it is to be observed:

1. The *ordinary* meaning of the Greek word *baptizo*, which expresses this mode, always is *immerse* or *dip*. Consequently, this word in all the most renowned versions, both ancient and modern, where it has been *translated*,\* has been rendered by an

\* In several versions, as the English, French, Spanish, &c., the word *baptizo* has only been *transferred* from the Greek. Thus, for example, it has been changed in the English to *baptize*, in the French to *baptiser*, &c.

expression which signifies *immerse* or *dip*. Thus it is in the most ancient translation of the New Testament, the Syriac Peschito, made in the second century;\* the oldest Latin, second or third century; the Coptic, third century; Ethiopic, fourth century; Gothic, fourth century; Armenian, fifth century; Syriac Philoxenian, sixth century; Arabic, sixth, seventeenth, and nineteenth centuries; as well as the German, the Danish, the Swedish, &c., of the sixteenth and subsequent centuries. Thus, for example, *baptizo* has been translated in the German by *taufen*, in Danish by *döbe*, in Swedish by *döpa*, which words signify to *dip* or *immerse*.

Respecting the first of these words, Dr. *Luther* writes: “*Taufe* (baptism) is in the Greek called *baptisma*, in the Latin *mersio*, that is, when we *totally dip* any thing in water, and it *runs together over it*. And it ought to be so, and it were right that we, according to the import of the word, should *immerse* in water or *taufen*, and again draw up from thence the child, or whosoever is baptized. For undoubtedly the word *taufe* is derived from *tief* (deep), because one dips into water what he

\* It is worthy of special notice, that this translation, which is acknowledged to be one of the most accurate versions of the New Testament extant, was made in the very country where the Apostles lived and wrote, and where both the Syriac and the Greek were constantly used, and perfectly understood. It was, consequently, executed by those who understood and spoke both languages precisely as the sacred writers themselves understood and spoke them.



*taufet* (baptizes). This, the meaning of baptism also requires; for it signifies that the old man and the sinful birth of flesh and blood shall be totally drowned by the grace of God. Therefore we ought "*fully to meet the signification, and give a right perfect sign.*"\*

2. If now we consider that the proper signification of *baptizo* always is *immerse*, we shall, by comparing the signification of the word with the *circumstances* under which it occurs, easily understand in what *mode* baptism was performed by John the Baptist, as well as by the Apostles and the first followers of Christ, and always is to be performed.

3. If John had baptized by pouring or sprinkling a little water, one cannot reasonably suppose that he would have obliged the people to resort a distance of many miles to Jordan; he would then surely have baptized in every village or town where souls through his preaching had been converted. For what need would there have been for John to draw "all the people" to great quantities of water, if the baptism had not been performed by immersion? Only a very little water would have been required, if the validity of baptism had not, in the least, depended on the mode.

4. Furthermore, we have to observe, that John not only chose the river Jordan for his baptism, but we also read: "They were baptized of him *in* Jor-

\* Walch's edition of Luther's Works, tom. 10, p. 2592.

dan," and "in the river of Jordan." The idea, that John would oblige great numbers to go down into the water of a river only in order to sprinkle them in the face, or pour upon their heads a little water, is too absurd to be cherished by any thinking Christian.

5. When it is recorded that John baptized in Enon, "because there was much water there," the *reason* why John chose for his baptism Enon, a place richly supplied with water, plainly indicates *immersion*. Those who practice pouring or sprinkling in our days do not usually seek out rivers, or places where there is *much* water, for baptism; and if it should happen that they administer the rite in such places, it would not be because of the *much* water there.

6. In regard, especially, to the baptism of our Lord and Saviour, the construction in the Greek most clearly informs us that He actually was *immersed* in Jordan. For when we read in our version, "Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan," it reads, according to the original, "Jesus was dipped of John *into* Jordan," (ebaptisthe hypo Joannou *eiston* Jordanen). On this phrase the learned Lutheran commentator, Dr. H. A. W. Meyer, remarks: "It expresses the idea of *immersion*,"\* an acknowledgment which no Greek scholar will be able con-

\* H. A. W. Meyer's Commentary, Göttingen, 1846, on Mark i. 9. Compare Winer in the New Testament Idioms.



scientifically to deny. Again, when it reads: "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway *out of the water*" (Matt. iii. 16), what unprejudiced reader, even of our version can escape the conclusion that the Lord Jesus was actually baptized by *immersion*?

7. Now let us ask, What disciple of Christ would not follow Him when He has condescended to go before us with His own example? Our Lord and Master saw best, in His infinite condescension, to honor and sanction, with His own example, this holy law of baptism, as well as that of the Lord's Supper. They were *both* holy laws to be given to His church; but He foreknew that some professors of His doctrine would be very reluctant to obey them. Therefore He added to His express commands the weight of His own example, and would by that means say, "If you are not able to understand my *words*, then understand my *act*; and if my commandments alone cannot induce you to obedience, oh, if you cherish any love toward me, follow my footsteps!"

8. Our Saviour, however, does not only speak to us most forcibly by His own act, but He unites with it this impressive instruction and exhortation: "Thus it becometh *US* to fulfill *all* righteousness." Matt. iii. 15. That He by the word *us* has reference not only to Himself, but to John, and with him *all* believers, is a commonly received truth. Our Saviour, consequently, means to say: "We ought to observe the whole will of our Father and

all His appointments; in the first place it becomes myself, as your Head and Master, then you as *my members, my people, and my servants.*"

#### TESTIMONIES OF DISTINGUISHED THEOLOGIANs.

DR. KNAPP, one of the most celebrated divines of the Lutheran Church, says: "We are not to consider that baptism which Jesus (by His disciples and Apostles) administered as distinct in its own nature and whole kind from that of John. For such an opinion is opposed by the authority of Christ himself and his Apostles; and if we regard these, we must confess that the baptism of each—of the harbinger, and the Messiah—was one and the same institute of God himself (John i. 33; Matt. xxi. 25; Acts i. 22); and that the design of each in administering it was one, inasmuch as it had the same regard to the repentance of the candidates and their faith in Christ, whether about to come or having come already. John i. 31; iii. 27; Matt. xi. 12; Mark i. 4; Luke iii. 3; x. 24; Acts xix. 4. After John had known Jesus to be the Messiah, he sent his own disciples expressly to him who had come, as the one who was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (John i. 29–36; Acts xix. 4); but did not himself cease to baptize (John iii. 23; vi. 1), although Jesus, while John was alive and at liberty, commanded to baptize by His own authority, and in His own name

John iii. 22-26; iv. 1, 2. John coöperated harmoniously; and each, in the most friendly manner, bore testimony to the character of the other. John iii. 26-37; Matt. xxi. 25; xi. 1; xvii. 11. Hence, among the Apostles and others who had already been baptized by John (Acts xviii. 25), no one, so far as we have any account, who professed his faith to have been placed in Jesus as the Messiah, was baptized anew.\*

DR. ERSKINE : † “John’s baptism was termed the *baptism of repentance*, and *baptism to repentance*, because he required of ALL whom he admitted to baptism, a profession of repentance, and exhorted them to such a conduct as would demonstrate their repentance genuine.” ‡

THOMAS SCOTT : “It does not appear that any but adults were baptized by John . . . adult Jews, professing repentance and a disposition to become the Messiah’s subjects, were the ONLY PERSONS whom John admitted to baptism.” §

BURKITT : “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance, of which infants were incapable.” ||

CALVIN : “The word baptizo signifies to *immerse*, and the rite of immersion was performed by

\* Scripta Vario Argumenti, maximam partem Exegetici et Historici, on 1 John v. 6-11.

† All the divines, who are only mentioned thus in this book, without any further description, are Pedobaptists.

‡ Booth’s “Pedobaptism Examined,” Ed. 2, Vol. 2, p. 241.

§ Commentary on Matt. iii. 5, 6.

|| Expository Notes on Matt. xix. 13-15.

the ancient church." . . . "From these words, John iii. 23, it may be inferred that baptism was administered by John and Christ *by plunging the whole body under water.*"\*

OTTO VON GERLACH: "I baptize you in water: the Greek word (baptizo) properly signifies *dip*. Baptism was performed in the first times of Christianity by *immersion* in water."†

DR. OLSHAUSEN: "When Jesus left the city, He approached to Jordan, where He baptized, yet so that He remained in Judea. In the vicinity John likewise baptized, because *deep water, adapted for immersion*, was there."‡

DR. DODDRIDGE: "Jesus had no sin to wash away, yet He was baptized; and God owned that ordinance so far as to make it the season of pouring forth the Spirit upon Him. And where can we expect this sacred effusion, but in a conscientious and humble attendance upon divine appointments?"§

POLHILL: "The pattern of Christ and the Apostles is more to me than all the human wisdom in the world."||

\* Institutiones, L. 5, C. 15, § 2. Com. in Joan. iii. 23.

† Commentary on Matt. iii. 11.

‡ Biblical Commentary, Part 1.

§ Family Expositor *in loc.*

|| In "The Scripture Guide to Baptism," by Pengilly.

## SECTION II.

### THE COMMISSION OF CHRIST CONCERNING BAPTISM.

THIS holy Commission is recorded by the Evangelists Matthew and Mark, and reads, in a verbal translation of the original, thus :

Matt. xxviii. 19-20—Going out make all nations disciples, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you all days, to the end of the world.

Mark xvi. 15, 16—Going out into all the world preach the Gospel to the whole creation. He who shall believe and be baptized shall be saved, but he who shall not believe shall be condemned.

#### REMARKS.

In Matt. xxviii. 19, according to our version, it reads : “Teach all nations, baptizing them, &c., teaching them, &c.” Pedobaptists are used to allege, in support of their doctrine, that the words in the original do not read as we have given them, but literally thus : “Make all nations disciples, baptizing them, &c., teaching them, &c.” And they

pretend that the words of the original, by consequence, are properly to be interpreted thus: "Make all nations disciples *in that* ye baptize them, &c., and teach them, &c.;" whence the import of the Commission would be, "that the Apostles and the churches should gather disciples for Christ *by first baptizing and then teaching* the nations."

It is true, the Greek word *matheteusate*, which in our version here is translated "teach," properly signifies "make disciples," as well as that Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, is rightly to be translated as above; but, notwithstanding, the interpretation of this passage by the Pedobaptists appears to be false, from the following reasons:

1. If all nations, according to this Commission, are to be made disciples *by first baptizing them, and then teaching them to observe the commandments of Christ*, then we also are commanded, *without any previous preaching or instruction, to baptize all adults*, as well as new-born children, if we can only accomplish it, whether by violence, fraud, or persuasion. For in the Commission the adults are not distinguished from children, and why should we not baptize the former on the same principle as the latter? But that the Apostles could not have received such a command is evident. For in the first place, they were not permitted to use either violence or fraud to promote the kingdom of Christ; and secondly, the nations would not, without previous knowledge of Christ and belief in Him, have

been willing to be baptized. Therefore, to command the Apostles to baptize the nations, before they were converted, would have been to command an absurdity.

2. None is made a disciple of Christ by first being baptized, and then taught to *observe* all things whatsoever He has commanded his *disciples*, that is to *do good works*; but only by believing in the Gospel, the glad tidings of the free salvation of sinners through Christ.

3. This interpretation is also opposed both to the example of the Lord himself—inasmuch as He *first made disciples, and then baptized them* (John iv. 1)—and to that of John the Baptist and the Apostles, who first brought men to repentance and faith, before they baptized them.

Thus it appears, on the very face of the Commission, even to those who are entirely unacquainted with the Greek, that it cannot be interpreted in that manner. But such an interpretation, as it is opposed to the whole doctrine of Christ, so it has also no foundation in the original; for this both, indeed, *allows* and *requires* a contrary interpretation, viz.: that we are in the *first place*, to *make disciples* by the preaching of the Gospel; in the *second place*, to *baptize the disciples*; and *thirdly*, to *teach* the baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded.

The Greek text *requires* the interpretation that we are *first* to make disciples by previous preaching



and instruction. For the proper signification of the word *matheteuo*, which expresses the commandment to *make disciples*, is to disciple *by previous preaching or instruction*, and no single reliable instance has yet been produced, where this word signifies to *disciple by baptizing, or in any other way, without including previous teaching*. In consequence, the most pious, learned, and distinguished divines among the Pedobaptists themselves have acknowledged, by common consent, both that the word *matheteuo* here signifies to make disciples *by previous instruction*, and that the subjects of baptism, according to the import of this Commission, are *first* to be made disciples, before they are baptized.

#### PEDOBAPTIST TESTIMONIES.

JOHN GERHARD, the Lutheran divine, alike celebrated for piety and learning, thus testifies :

“By Plutarch, in the Life of Socrates, *matheteuein* signifies with the dative to be a disciple and hearer; but in this place (Matt. xxviii. 19) it is used with the accusative, and signifies *the very instruction or the act of teaching*. The Syriac translator\* has *thalmad*, teach, whence *thalmid*, disciple, is derived. In the passive sense it is used for *catecheisthai*, which is to be instructed or, as it were, initiated in the first principles of any doctrine. When, therefore, Christ commands the Apostles *matheteuein ta ethne* (make disciples of the nations),

\* Viz. of the New Testament.



He commands them to *teach the articles of the Christian faith*; and such as embrace those by a simple obedience of faith, become the *thalmidim*, *mathetai*, disciples of Christ, or, as we would say, Christians.\*

CALVIN: "Because Christ requires teaching *before* baptizing, and will have believers only admitted to baptism, baptism does not seem to be rightly administered, except faith *précède*."†

GROTIUS: "Seeing there are two kinds of teaching, one by way of introduction to the first principles, the other by way of more perfect instruction, the former seems to be intended by the word *matheuein*; for that is, as it were, to initiate into discipline, and *is to go before baptism*; the later is intended by the word *didaskein*, which is here placed after baptism."‡

DR. BARROW: "What the action itself enjoined is, what the manner and form thereof, is apparent by the words of our Lord's institution: 'Going forth,' saith He, 'teach, or disciple, all nations, baptizing them.' The action is baptizing or immersing in water; the object thereof, those persons, of any nation, whom His ministers can *by their instruction and persuasion render disciples*—that is, such as do sincerely believe the truth of his doc-

\* Harmonia Ev., Geneva, MDCXXVIII., tom. 1, part 2, p. 349.

† Harmonia Ev. Comment., *ad. loc.*

‡ Annotations *in loc.*

trine, and seriously resolve to obey His commandments.”\*

VENEMA : “ ‘Go,’ says our Lord to the Apostles, ‘teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.’ This is an excellent passage, and explains the whole nature of baptism. *Before* persons were baptized, it was necessary for them to *believe the preaching of the Apostles*, which faith they were to profess in baptism. For the word *matheteuein*, in the style of the New Testament, does not signify barely to admit into a school and instruction, but to admit after the doctrine is believed, and after a previous subjection to the school.”†

DR. WHITBY : “ *Matheteuein* here is ‘to preach the Gospel to all nations,’ and to engage them to believe it, in order to their profession of that faith by baptism ; as seems apparent, 1. From the parallel Commission, Mark xvi. 15 : ‘Go preach the Gospel to every creature : he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.’ 2. From the Scripture notion of a disciple, that being still the same as a believer. If here it should be said that I yield too much to the anti-Pedobaptists by saying, that to be made disciples here is to be taught to believe in Christ, I desire any one to tell me how the

\* Works, Vol. 1, p. 518, edit. 1722.

† Dissertat. Sac. L. 2. c. 14, § 6.

Apostles could *matheteuein*, make a disciple of a heathen, or an unbelieving Jew, without being teachers of them; whether they were not sent to preach to those that could hear, and to teach them to whom they preached, that 'Jesus was the Christ,' and only to baptize them when they did believe this."\*

POOLE'S CONTINUATORS: "'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.' The Greek is *matheteusate*, 'make disciples of all nations;' but that must be by preaching, and instructing them in the principles of the Christian faith; and Mark expounds it by telling us our Saviour said: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature capable of hearing and receiving it.'"<sup>†</sup>

RICHARD BAXTER: "Go, disciple me all nations, baptizing them. As for these that say they *are disciplined by baptizing*, and not *before baptizing*, they speak not the sense of that text, nor that which is true or rational, if they mean it absolutely as so spoken; *else why should one be baptized more than another?* This is not like some occasional historical mention of baptism; but it is the very Commission of Christ to His Apostles for preaching and baptizing, and purposely expresseth their several works in their several places and order. Their *first* task is *by teaching to make disciples*, who are by Mark called '*believers*.' The *second* work is to baptize

\* Annot. in loc.

† Ibid.

them, whereunto is annexed the promise of their salvation. The *third* work is to teach them all other things, which are afterward to be learned in the school of Christ. *To condemn this order is to renounce all rules of order; for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess my conscience is fully satisfied from this text that it is one sort of faith, even saving, that must go before baptism, and the profession whereof the minister must expect.*"\*

EPISCOPIUS: "Perhaps you will object that *matheteusate* does not signify properly to *teach*, but to *make disciples*. Be it so; yet they could not make disciples, but by teaching them, and by teaching them those things which belonged to the Christian religion; for *disciple* and *teacher* are relatives. Therefore, Mark, xvi. 15, does not use *matheteuein*, but *keruttein*, i. e., to *preach* or *teach*. Besides, *matheteuein*, or the Hebrew *thalmad*, does not, in this place, signify barely to *teach*, but to *teach so as to gain disciples, thalmidim.*"†

LIMBORCH: "They could not make disciples but by teaching. By this instruction the disciples were brought over to the faith *before* they were baptized, Mark xvi. 15, 16." . . . "Hence also, our Lord commanded that men should *first* be taught and

\* Disput. of Right to Sac., pp. 91, 142, 150.

† Respons. ad Quæst. 37, pp. 35, 36. Apud Episcopii Opera, tom. i., part 2.

brought over to the faith, and *after that* be baptized. Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15 16."\*

Vossius: "Respecting adults, it is required that they be taught the Christian religion and profess it, *before* they be baptized; for this the very institution of baptism teaches, Matt xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15, 16. We are taught the same thing by the practice of John the Baptist, and of the Apostles. Matt. iii. 1, 2; Luke iii. 3; Acts ii. 38-41."†

JEROME, the most learned of the Latin Church Fathers: "They first teach all the nations, then, when they are taught, they immerse them in water;‡ for it cannot be that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul have before received the true faith."§

These testimonies from the most renowned divines among the Pedobaptists themselves, should be sufficient to convince every one of the true signification of the word *matheteuo*, and consequently, of the true meaning of the Commission itself. We wish, therefore, only to add that, when our Saviour gave this command, "Go and make all nations disciples," his express *will* and *design* must have been that the Apostles should make the nations not merely nominal Christians, but His "disciples indeed." What idea Christ himself attached to this

\* Instit.. Lib. v. c. 67, § 7. Ibid., c. 63, § 2.

† Disput. de Baptismo; disput. xii., § 3.

‡ "Intingunt aqua:" "they immerse in water."

§ In Matt. xxviii. 19. Wall, Hist. of Inf. Bapt., Part ii., c. 1, § 2.

expression we may learn from his own language, John viii. 31 : "Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." They might be *called* disciples, if they professed their faith in Jesus ; but they were not so truly, unless they *continued* in the faith of Jesus. Again he says, Luke xiv. 27 : "Whosoever does not bear his cross, and come after me, *cannot be* my disciple." A disciple of Christ is, therefore, one who bears his cross and follows him. Consequently, we must interpret *matheteuo*, (make disciples), in agreement with the idea our Lord himself attached to the word *disciple* ; we must take the command, "Disciple all nations," in the *best* sense, which is to make the nations "disciples indeed," that is, sincerely-believing, self-denying followers of Christ.

But baptism cannot make such. Persons coming to be baptized are, at the time, either believers or unbelievers. If they are believers, they are disciples already ; if they are unbelievers, baptism cannot make them believers, and therefore cannot make them disciples. Therefore it must be done by preaching, instructing, and exhorting ; whereby sinners are brought to genuine repentance and faith—are made true followers of Christ.

From all this, we conclude that, whereas our Saviour in the very word (*matheteuo*) which expresses his command, most distinctly prescribes *the mode* in which the Apostles should make disciples :

viz., *always by previous instruction*, it follows incontestibly, according to the Commission, that they should *never* make the nations disciples by *first* baptizing them, and *then* teaching them to observe His commandments.

It is in vain to object that this rule concerns only the adults, and that new-born children are exceptions to the general rule; for that is in opposition to the perspicuous meaning of the Commission, which *prescribes only one way of making disciples*, without any difference or exception; whence it follows that, according to the Commission, the *same thing* is to be done to all, and that, too, *in the same order*. Are the adults always to be made disciples by previous preaching and instruction?—then the children are to be made disciples in the same way; for there is not *one* law for the adults and *another* for children, but *one and the same for all*; so that what it enjoins on *one*, it equally enjoins on *all*. Here then remains only one alternative; either that teaching must *always*, or that it must *never* precede baptism. But now, the import of the word *matheteuo* proves that teaching must precede baptism; therefore, infants cannot, according to the Commission, be made disciples, by being first baptized, and then taught.

That children are not to be made disciples of Christ by first baptizing them, and then, after they have advanced in years, teaching them to observe the commandments of Christ, is further evident from



the fact that the construction in the Greek expresses a *simultaneousness in the performance of the commanded acts*: *make disciples, baptize and teach*. The participles *baptizontes* (baptizing), and *didaskontes* (teaching), are clearly to coincide in time, or follow immediately upon, the main action, *matheteusate* (make disciples).\* Whence it appears, that they who are qualified to be baptized, should also be capable of being taught immediately the commandments of Christ; but new-born children are not competent to receive such instruction; therefore, neither are they qualified to receive baptism.

Again, if, as Pedobaptists contend, men are to be baptized before they are made disciples, *because* the command to baptize is in the present partici-

\* "In all participial constructions, a relation of time is properly at the foundation, that is, the action of the participle may stand in whatsoever connection with the main action; yet it is almost always taught as past, concurrent, or future *in relation to it*, and is accordingly *placed in the required tense*."—Buttman's Greek Grammar.

*Poion eirenen*: Participle present, because the peace-making occurs *simultaneously* with the creation mentioned."—H. A. W. Myer's Commentary on Eph. ii. 15.

In consequence of the grammatical rule above mentioned, the Lutheran divine, Dr. *Olshausen*, makes the following confession. "Yet the combination of *matheteusate* with *baptizontes* and *didaskontes* contains a *distinct* intimation that the Redeemer did not directly think of infant baptism."—Biblical Commentary on Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

We add: This combination of the words contains a *distinct* intimation, not only that our Lord and Master had not the *direct*, but not even the remotest thought of infant baptism.



ple, then they, likewise, must be taught to observe all the commandments of Christ, before they are made disciples; because this latter command is also in the present participle. But how can ministers of Christ teach *them* to observe all the commandments of our Lord who are not his disciples? Such persons cannot be expected to receive His orders. The reason why men are expected to listen to them is, that they, being his disciples, acknowledge Him as their Lord and Master; for a servant will listen to his lord's commands, but all others will spurn them. Hence it is apparent, that when Christ said: "Disciple the nations, teaching them to observe, etc.," He meant that the Apostles should *first* disciple the nations, and *then* teach them to obey his commandments. But since the expression "disciple, teaching," means disciple *first*, and *then* teach, the expression "disciple, baptizing," likewise means disciple *first*, and *then* baptize.

There is, therefore, in the fact that the command to baptize is in the present participle, no valid reason why the words of the original (make disciples, baptizing), should be translated thus: "Make all nations disciples *in that* ye, (or, *by means that* ye) baptize them, etc., and teach them, etc.;" for, though it be true that the present participle, when it stands next after a definitive verb, *may* be resolved by means of the particles "in that," or "by," it is nevertheless far from being the general rule; but such accessory sentences as those occur-

ring in this passage, *generally express only those kinds of accessory circumstances, which are thought to be connected with the principal notion, and may be resolved not only by means of the particles "in that," or "by," but also by means of manifold other particles, as and, then, because, who, etc.\** Of this the original of the New Testament contains almost innumerable instances, of which the following may serve as evidence. "There came to Him a certain man *kneeling down* to him." Matt. xvii. 14. The man did not come by means of kneeling, which would have had an odd appearance, but he came *and* knelt. "Lend, *hoping for nothing again*." Luke vi. 35. Here the words are not to be interpreted thus: "Lend, *by* hoping for nothing again" but thus: "Lend, *and* when ye lend hope for no return." In like manner, the Commission is to be interpreted thus: "Make disciples; and as you make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to

\* *Matthiæ*: "Every action which admits of being considered as *only accompanying* another, which is the main action, and may thus be represented as an *accessory circumstance* of another; the Greeks are fond of expressing by the participle, and even when two finite verbs are joined by *and*, one of them is generally put in the participle, and the copula is omitted." . . . "The accessory circumstances which, by means of the participle, are joined to a substantive or a main action, are 1, either such as in other languages are expressed by the pronoun relative, together with a finite verb, etc., or 2, such as in the Latin and German are expressed by several other particles: *then, or when, because, though, by means of, in order to, etc.*"—*Ausführliche Greek Gram.*, 2 theil., pp. 1294, 1295.

observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Thus our old Swedish version, too, has very well resolved the two participial sentences, "baptizing," etc., "teaching," etc., by means of the participle *and*: "Teach all nations, *and* baptize them, . . . *and* teach them . . . ."

Finally, it is to be observed, that when it reads, "Make all nations disciples, baptizing them," etc., the word *them* does not refer to the nations as unbelievers, but as disciples. Our Saviour could not possibly have meant that the Apostles should baptize all men without exception; for this would have been, in the first place, a commandment to baptize without any previous preaching and instruction, even blasphemers, atheists, idolaters, etc.; and secondly, it is in decided opposition to the context, from which it was evident that the Apostles, *before* baptism, were to make disciples by preaching and instruction (*matheteusate*), and *immediately after* baptism, teach them to observe all the commandments of Christ. Therefore, the word "them," in this place, is to be understood with a *necessary limitation* to such as previously have been made the disciples of Christ. Such a limitation often occurs in the new Testament. Thus it reads, for instance, in Matt. iii. 5, 6: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and *all* Judea, and *all* the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him, confessing their sins." Here it is not meant that *all* men in *all* Judea, etc., were baptized by John, but only a

*certain class* of the inhabitants of the whole country, viz., such as confessed their sins. Likewise, in Matt. xxiv. 9: "Ye shall be hated *of all nations* for my name's sake," Here it is not meant that they also should be hated by infants: nor is it meant that all of mature years would hate them, but only a certain class of all nations. Thus, too, when it reads, "Make all nations disciples, baptizing them, etc., and teaching them, etc.," it is not meant that the Apostles should baptize all, without discrimination, among all nations, but only a certain class among all nations. This is also in accordance with the rules of the Greek grammar. For, according to the rules, the word to which "them" (*autous*) refers, may be considered as taken out of the verb *matheteuein* (make disciples). That which precedes the word "them," may thus be considered to be the word *disciples* (*mathetai*), taken out of *matheteuo*, whence the meaning, according to the original is: "Make all nations disciples, *baptizing the disciples.*"\*

To those, therefore, who reason thus: 'Christ has commanded to baptize *all nations*, and new-born children are a part of all nations, consequently new-born children are also to be baptized as well as adults;" we only say that such a conclusion has no ground whatever in the Commission which both *al-*

\* For further instances of such a mode of speech in the New Testament, see Matt. xix. 13; Eph. v. 12; 1 Pet. iii. 14. Comp. Winer's Idioms of the New Testament; Matthiæ, Greek Gram. 2 th., pp. 978, 979.

*lows* and *requires* that the word "*them*" be limited to such as have been made disciples of Christ.

We have hitherto been considering only the records of our Lord's Commission as given by Matthew. What we have learned from this might, of itself, be sufficient, once for all, to convince us of the true meaning of this Commission. But as if to preclude any occasion to cavil at the distinctly-expressed will of Christ, the Holy Spirit has caused the Evangelist Mark to record the same Commission, if possible, in still more express terms. According to this Evangelist, Christ commands the Apostles to "go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation," that is, to all men endowed with reason,\* and in this way to bring men to believe in him, or, as Matthew expresses it, "*make disciples.*" To which Christ adds this solemn declaration: "He that shall become a believer, and be baptized, shall be saved; but he that shall remain an unbeliever, shall be damned."

In order plainly to understand the import of this command, we should put ourselves in the place of the Apostles. Let us imagine that Christ person-

\* The whole creation, that is, all created beings; by which here, as well as in Col. i. 23, all *men* are signified, as the *kat' exochen* (preeminently) created, as also the Rabbinic *habirijoth* is used.—H. A. W. Meyer's Commentary on this passage:—

"Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the congregation, and read therein from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and *those that could understand*, etc."—See Neh. chapter viii.

ally had given us this command and declaration. What would we have had in the first place to do? Answer: To go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to all classes of men. That would have been our *first* concern. But the Lord declares that, while we thus preach, it will take place that some will believe our preaching and be baptized, and thus be saved. Now again the question arises: *When* should our hearers be baptized? *Before* we had preached the Gospel to them, and *they* had believed it? or *after* they had heard the Gospel and believed? The answer follows of itself. *We could not expect* that they would be willing to submit to baptism; nor *would we feel authorized*, by virtue of this Commission, to baptize them until they had heard and professed themselves to believe our preaching. The order which the Lord has here sanctioned for his church in all times is, consequently, this: *The preaching of the Gospel—faith—baptism—salvation*. Whence it follows that, in this place, as well as in Matthew, *no word is found which can apply to the baptism of new-born children, without any previous teaching and instruction.\**

\* *Clement of Alexandria*, who lived in the *second* century after Christ, and himself spoke the Greek language as his vernacular tongue, comprehends the records of the Commission of Christ, given by Matthew and Mark in the following short and plain paraphrase: "Go about and preach, and *such as believe* baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"—*Periiontes kerussate kai tous pisteuontas baptizete eis*



We observe that in the declaration connected with the commission to preach the Gospel, is contained a *promise* and a *threatening*, directed to the *hearers of the Gospel*. The promise reads: "He that shall become a believer and be baptized, shall be saved." The threatening: "He that shall be an unbeliever, shall be condemned." But in this promise and threatening is also implied a *command* to all the hearers of the Gospel to *believe* and *be baptized*. The following example may serve as an illustration. Suppose that a king's subjects had revolted, and the king had given out a commission to this effect: "Go and proclaim a pardon to these rebellious subjects; he that lays down his arms and takes an oath of allegiance, shall be pardoned; but he that continues to follow the standard of rebellion, shall be punished." Could any one say that there were not implied both a command to lay down the arms of rebellion and also to take an oath of allegiance? It is no otherwise than if the king had said to *every one* of the rebellious subjects: "Lay down

*onoma*, etc.—(Wall, History of Infant Baptism, Oxford, 1844, vol. iii. p. 331.)

Which interpretation of the Commission should we rather trust? this of Clement, the ancient church-father, who himself, as his vernacular, spoke the language in which the New Testament is originally written, or that of some among the modern Pedobaptists, according to which our Saviour is represented as having commanded his Apostles to make the nations disciples by *first* baptizing them, and *then* teaching them to observe his commandments?



your arms, and take an oath of allegiance ; for unless you do it, you must be punished." Thus, too, when it reads: "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature ; he that shall become a believer and be baptized, shall be saved ; but he that shall be an unbeliever, shall be condemned ;" is there not in these words implied the most serious command, under the penalty of a forfeiture of salvation, to *believe and be baptized*? Though the command is not expressed directly, yet it is just as forcibly expressed indirectly. It is no otherwise than if the Lord had said to every one of us: "*Believe the Gospel and be baptized.*"

Here again the question arises: *In what order*, according to this Commission, ought a man to apply for baptism ; while he is yet an unbeliever and enemy against God, or after he has been converted and become a believer ? The answer again follows of itself. It would be a blasphemy, if rebellious subjects, with the arms of rebellion in their hands directed against the king, offered themselves to take an oath of allegiance in his presence,—the king would meet them with his anger and punishment. Thus, too, if an unbeliever offers himself to be baptized, the Lord meets him with His anger, and asks: "Who hath required this at your hands?" Isa. i. 12. "Why shouldest *thou* take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my word behind thee?" Ps. l. 16, 17. Hence it is evident that *believers only* are to com-

ply with the command to be baptized. As in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, the Apostles were commanded to baptize *disciples only*; so, too, according to *this* commandment of Christ, *only such are to be baptized as have heard and believed the Gospel*.

And in regard to infants especially, it may be observed, that as in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, not a syllable can apply to new-born children, so neither here. Christ could not have commanded his servants to gather numbers of new-born children, and gravely preach to them that they are lost sinners, and that they ought to repent and believe in Christ, in order to be saved. And just as the servants of Christ are not commanded to preach the Gospel to new-born children, so the children themselves are not commanded, on the forfeiture of salvation, *to believe it*, inasmuch as they are neither able to understand, nor by faith to receive, the Gospel. Consequently, they can not be included in the commandment *to be baptized*; which embraces *only those who have heard and believed the Gospel*. This passage therefore furnishes an argument against infant baptism; for inasmuch as only such as have *heard and believed* the Gospel are to comply with the Lord's commandment to be baptized, *all others must necessarily be excluded from the baptism here enjoined*. If you wish to have a baptism for others, it finds no authority whatever in this Commission, but *must necessarily be grounded on another commandment*.

But it is objected that, though new-born children are not able to understand the preaching of the Gospel, they may, however, *in a certain sense*, be said to believe, wherefore they also have a right to baptism. To this we answer: Even could it be proved that new-born children in *any* sense are able to believe, yet they are evidently not included among those *to whom* the servants of Christ should preach the Gospel, and of whom He solemnly declares that, if they believe the preaching of the Gospel and are baptized, they will be saved; but if they do not believe, they will be condemned: that is, they cannot believe the Gospel of Christ in a *scriptural* sense. But it cannot be proved that they are able to believe in *any* sense; which will be evident, if we examine the arguments commonly alleged by Pedobaptists, for this purpose.

1. Their first argument is: "John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit even in the womb; consequently, he must then already have possessed faith." Answer: It is one thing to be filled with the Holy Spirit in the womb, and another thing to believe. The one does not necessarily presuppose the other; and the Scriptures speak not a word of John's faith in the womb. That unborn or new-born children necessarily must have faith, in order to be sanctified or saved, cannot be proved from Heb. xi. 6. For this passage speaks not of infants, but only of adults, as is evident from the context. For next to the words, "Without faith it is impossible

to please God," it immediately reads : " For he that cometh to Him must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Here it is evident, that these records speak only of such persons as have arrived at the years of discretion. For what can infants *know* and *believe* of the character of God, who *rewards* and *punishes*? But even if we take for granted, that John the Baptist in the womb really did believe, it does not follow, that all children in the womb believe. If the Lord deviates from the established course of things, and works a miracle with an individual, it does not follow that He works the same miracle on all men. If Elias could bid fire to come down from heaven to devour his enemies (2 Kings i.), it does not follow, that all men have a power and right to do the same.

2. It is said : " Children cried Hosanna in the Temple ; consequently they must have believed." Answer : The children who are said, in Matt. xxi. 15, to have cried Hosanna, were not *infants*. For the Greek word *paidas*, there corresponding to " children," signifies properly *grown children*. And their following Christ is proof that they were old enough to believe. We do not object against the baptism of children, when they give proper evidence of faith in Christ. But where is such evidence to be found among infants ?

On the words quoted by our Saviour, " Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast

perfected praise," v. 16, Dr. H. A. W. MEYER writes: "In the application of the passage, Ps. viii. 2, in its fulfillment here occurring by the crying of the children in the Temple, among whom naturally were *no sucklings*, the expression '*and sucklings*' is left out of consideration, and of the words '*infants and sucklings*,' the idea of *children* only is to be retained."\*

3. The Pedobaptists quote also the words of Christ in Matt. xviii. 6, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, etc." To this we answer: Although these words say, that "*little ones*" believe in Christ, they, however, do not speak of *new-born children*. For in the first place, the child that gave occasion to these words of the Lord, was not a new-born child, but such a one as of its own accord could understand and comply with a calling to come to Christ. For in v. 2 it reads: "Jesus *called* a child to Him." And when it, of its own accord, upon calling had come forward, He *set* it in the midst of the disciples: it was consequently not carried in the arms. We are free to admit, that this child *really believed* in Christ. But the text says plainly, that it was *such* a child that of its own accord could perceive and understand a calling from the Lord and come to Him. Of this child, then, Christ says, "Whosoever shall receive such a child [as this] in my name, receiveth me."

\* Commentary in loc.

And He further adds : " But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me," &c. Here these, or *such little ones as believe*, are distinguished from other *little ones which do not believe*. None would ever contend that all children in the world of from five to twelve years really believed in Christ, although *some* at this age may believe in Him. In the second place, the word *paidion* (child) which is found in the original, in Mark v. 39-42, is also used of a girl of twelve years. The child which here was called forward and placed before the disciples might, consequently, have arrived at the age of *twelve* years.

These are the principal passages which Pedobaptists allege, in order to prove that infants possess, or are able to possess faith. Hence we perceive how uncertain the ground is on which they build. With all their arguments they can only show what God *is able* to do, not what He ordinarily and commonly *does*, with infants. If infants have faith, why do they not manifest the fruits of faith ? Until such manifestation is made, we must reasonably doubt. According to the doctrine of the Pedobaptists, we are to baptize new-born children only on the ground that God, to whom nothing is impossible, *is able* to work faith in their hearts. But this is *to tempt God*. Such an argument the devil also adduced, when he wished to persuade the Lord to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple ; for, said he, God is *surely able to preserve thee*. Matt.



iv. 5-8. Why not, for the same reason, also give to infants the Lord's Supper, to which they have a right just as well as to baptism?

Now we not only have no single passage in the Scriptures to prove that God ordinarily works faith in infants, but, on the contrary, it expressly declares, that they in an ordinary way cannot have faith. For thus says the Apostle: "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not *heard*. And how shall they hear without a preacher? So then *faith cometh by hearing*." Rom. x. 14, 17. The import of these words is so evident that a little child could easily understand it. If faith "*cometh by hearing*," and new-born children are capable of believing, why should we not also statedly preach to them?

In what way the Holy Spirit produces faith we may learn from the following passages: John xvii. 20: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall *believe on me through their word*." John xx. 31; "These [signs] are *written*, that ye might *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." Acts xv. 7: "The gentiles, by my mouth, *heard the word of the gospel* and *believed*." 1 Cor. xv. 11: "So we *preach*, and so ye *believed*." Eph. i. 13: "In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye *heard the word of the truth*, the *gospel* of your salvation." 1 Thess. ii. 13: "When ye *received the word of God which ye heard of us*, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the



word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that *believe*." Thus the Scriptures everywhere teach, that the only means by which faith comes is *the word of truth*, preached or written, and received in the intellect; any other means of receiving faith the Scriptures nowhere have revealed.

As the Pedobaptists themselves cannot rely on their own interpretation of the Commission, they also are compelled to concede, that neither in this Commission nor anywhere else in the New Testament, have we any *express commandment* to baptize new-born children. But while they have not been able to ground infant baptism on any express commandment of God, they have devised other arguments in its defense, some of the principal of which we will now adduce and examine.

1. That the Apostles, they say, did not receive any express commandment to baptize new-born children, is not to be wondered at, for their commission was to "go forth" to form congregations and *plant* the church. But the case must be otherwise when congregations are formed and the church is planted, for then the children belong to the church from their connection with their parents. Hence it is right and becoming, that they also should be united to the church by baptism, especially as infant baptism is not in the Scriptures *expressly forbidden*.

To this we answer: Why infant baptism was not as becoming for the Apostolic as for subsequent

times, we are unable to understand. Were not flourishing Christian churches found in the Apostolic age? Were there not in these churches many believing families with both older and younger, yea, new-born children? Had not these children just as good a right to baptism as those who were born in the subsequent ages? And are not the servants of the Lord commissioned to "go forth" into the whole world and form churches in *our time*, as well as in the days of the Apostles? As all this cannot be denied, it is passing strange that, in the whole New Testament, there should not be found the least allusion to the use and need of infant baptism, or the least trace of its existence, if the Lord had designed it to be introduced into His church? That the children, by reason of their connection with their parents, belong to the church, and therefore are to be united to it by baptism, is assumed without any warrant from the Bible.\* That, finally, new-born children may be baptized on the ground that infant baptism is not *expressly forbidden*, is most absurd. On this principle you may also baptize *new-born children of the heathen*,† as well as *all unconverted grown persons*; for where in the Scriptures is it expressly forbidden? Yea, further, on this principle the Catholics may baptize their

\* See further on this subject in the Exposition of 1 Cor. vii.

† It is a known fact that the Catholics even baptize the children of the heathen; which custom, however, is rejected by all Protestant churches.

bells, which they also do. The Commission does not contain any precept to baptize bells, but neither does it contain any *express prohibition*. The argument of the Romanist is just as good as that of the Protestant Pedobaptist, and his bell-baptism is much more harmless. For the sprinkling a little water upon a bell can do *it* neither good nor evil; but the performing of the same ceremony on a babe in the name of the Trinity, may produce to the individual and the community an incalculable harm. On this principle nothing can be objected against mass offerings, soul masses for the dead, holy water, and other abominable abuses. For the Catholic may justly ask the Protestants: "Where are these ancient holy rites expressly forbidden in the Scriptures?" Again, on the same principle, may the Greek church justly say to the Protestants: "You forbid us to give the Eucharist to infants, show us an express prohibition in the Scriptures, else you have lost your cause."

2. Pedobaptists further object that, according to our principles, the women would have no right to commune at the Lord's table, as nothing in the Scriptures was expressly stated concerning it, nor concerning the sanctification of the Lord's day, monogamy, &c.

To this we answer: We do not reject infant baptism merely because there is no express divine precept requiring it, but because there is neither com-

mand, nor example, nor fair inference in its favor, in a single passage in the word of God.

On the other hand, as to the title of women to the Lord's Supper, it is in the Scriptures placed beyond any doubt. For the command to celebrate the Lord's Supper, originally given to the Apostles, was not given to them as *Apostles*, nor as *men*, but as *disciples of Christ*. And when our Lord commissioned His Apostles to teach His disciples to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them, it is evident that even *females* were included in that Commission, for they were *believers*, Acts v. 14, and *baptized*, Acts viii. 12. As the commandment, therefore, to celebrate the Lord's Supper was *one* of all the things that Christ had enjoined on His disciples to observe, women, as well as men, are evidently commanded to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Further, the New Testament tells us plainly and unambiguously, that even *females* partook of the Lord's Supper. For according to what we have already learned, they were among the "*all who believed*" and "*broke bread,*"\* Acts ii. 42, and among "*the disciples*" who "*broke the bread,*" Acts xx. 7; they partook together with the men in the public services, 1 Cor. xi., and especially in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, v. 20; they were, as well as the males, exhorted to examine themselves before the celebration of the Supper, v.

\* That is, celebrated the Lord's Supper. Confer. 1 Cor. x. 16.

28. Is there, in the New Testament, to be found such an evidence in favor of infant baptism?

As to the substitution of the Lord's day for the Jewish Sabbath, that change was made by the Apostles, who were authorized by the Lord "to set all things in order" that pertained to the worship and government of the church. This change, therefore, possesses to us the nature both of a precept and a precedent. Acts xx. 7: "And upon the *first* day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. "Upon the *first* day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." 1 Cor. xvi. 2. "I was in the Spirit on the *Lord's day*." Rev. i. 10. Here we have clear evidence that the Apostles kept "the Lord's day," or the Sunday, holy. Where do we find any such evidence that they baptized new-born children?

As to the subject of monogamy, we point only to such passages as these: Matt. v. 32; xix. 4-10; Mark x. 6-9; 1 Cor. vii. 2, 10-16; Eph. v. 31. Every one who with attention peruses these passages, will undoubtedly perceive that monogamy in the New Testament is distinctly and definitely prescribed.

3. Another argument in favor of infant baptism runs thus: "The ultimate authority for infant baptism in the bosom of a regular Christian community, and under a sufficient guarantee of pious education—

for only on these terms do we advocate it—lies in the universal import of Christ's person and work, which extends as far as humanity itself. Christ is not only able but willing to save mankind of all classes, in all circumstances; of both sexes, and at all stages of life, and consequently to provide for all these the necessary means of grace. A Christ able and willing to save none but adults, would be no such Christ as the Gospel presents. The exclusion of a part of our race from the blessings of the kingdom of heaven on account of age has not the slightest warrant in the Holy Scriptures, and our noblest impulses, our deepest religious feelings, rise against such a particularism." . . . "Baptists, in admitting infants into heaven without regeneration or faith, either deny original sin and guilt, or open a way of salvation unknown, nay, directly opposed to, the Gospel."\*

To this we answer: We believe in "the universal import of Christ's person and work," with respect to all persons who have the means of gaining any knowledge concerning them. But as to the relation of His "person and work" to the generations which lived and died, especially out of the circle of the Old Testament revelations, before Christ came; to the untaught heathen world since that time; and to the infants and children in Christian lands who die before they become capable of direct instruc-

\* History of the Apostolic Church. By Phil. Schaff, New York, 1853, p. 572.



tion, we have to confess ourselves in the dark. We cannot take conjectures, assertions, vague popular opinions, or doubtful interpretations of obscure and uncertain passages of Scripture, as knowledge.

When it is alleged that "the exclusion of a part of our race from the blessings of the kingdom of heaven on account of age has not the slightest warrant in the Holy Scriptures," we observe that this, as an argument against the opposers of infant baptism, assumes that infants, unless baptized before they die, must be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. Again, when it is said that "the Baptists, in admitting infants into heaven without regeneration or faith, either deny original sin and guilt, or open a way of salvation unknown, nay, directly opposed to the Gospel," the belief is plainly signified, that those infants to whom baptism as the sacrament of regeneration has not been applied before death must be lost. Hence the ground on which infant baptism here is advocated is really this: *baptism is essential to salvation*, a proposition which we, in another part of our work, shall have a fair opportunity to refute.

The further objections which are made against the true interpretation of the Commission concerning the *subjects* of baptism, we shall hereafter have occasion to answer; and we proceed to consider what the Lord in His commission has prescribed with regard to the *mode* of baptism.



We contend that this mode is *only one*, and is, by the Lord himself, most distinctly defined. Christ must have expressed His commandment concerning the mode of baptism in that sense which the word used by Him had received in common language; for in this commandment there is nothing which requires that the word shall be understood in any other than the ordinary and general sense. If, therefore, we can ascertain the ordinary meaning that the word *baptizo* had received in the time of Christ and the Apostles, we also shall know with certainty what meaning our Saviour has attached to it in His commission. For our Saviour could no more have given a new meaning to *baptizo* in the commission, than to *phago* (to eat) and *pino* (to drink) in the Institution of the Supper. He spoke to His disciples in the language of the people, and the words which he used signified, as they fell from His lips, just what the people were accustomed to understand by them, in the established usages of the language. Let it also, at the same time, be remembered, that in all laws the words are required to be taken and obeyed in their *ordinary* signification. But now it is a commonly received and undisputed truth that the ordinary and general meaning of the word *baptizo*, in the time of Christ and the Apostles, was none other than *dip* or *immerse*, just as the ordinary and usual meaning of *phago* and *pino* was to *eat* and *drink*.

Many, who admit that the Lord in His commis-

sion has prescribed immersion in baptism, do not, however, consider this mode to be necessary and essential, but imagine *that* it is quite indifferent how the water is applied, whether you *immerse*, or *wash*, or *pour*, or *sprinkle*. Here we ask: If the Lord has prescribed immersion, then is not this act necessary and essential to constitute baptism? Can you fulfill a command to *immerse* by *sprinkling* or *pouring*? If you, in the Lord's Supper, would undertake to put the bread under the sole of the foot, and pour the wine on the top of the head, instead of *eating* and *drinking*, under pretense that it is quite indifferent in what manner the bread and wine are used, would not that be a trifling with that ordinance? Likewise when you say, "I baptize (that is dip or immerse) you in the name of the Sacred Trinity," and meanwhile do not dip, but sprinkle or pour, is not that a trifling with the word of the Lord and with His holy ordinance? *What* has the Lord commanded? Is it not a great presumption to question whether His commandments, which are plainly designed to be in force until the end of time, are *essential*, or given only as a *mere show*? Which must here have the precedence, the Lord's *express* command, or our own fancy founded on rooted habits and an old abuse? Let us learn it from an example! Naaman, captain of the host of the King of Assyria, a great man with his master, was plagued with an incurable disease—the leprosy. He had heard that the prophet Elisha, in Samaria,

could work his cure ; he came, therefore, with his horses and his chariot, and stood at the door of the prophet's house. " And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying : ' Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.' Then Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said : ' I thought he would come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and so recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? may I not wash in them and be clean ?' So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and said, ' My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it ? How much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean ?' Then went he down and dipped himself seven times, according to the saying of the man of God, and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." 2 Kings v. 1-14. Hence we learn, how *necessary* it is to follow faithfully the express command of God. Had Naaman dipped himself a hundred times in the waters of Abana and Pharpar, or had he commanded his servants to bring him a little water from the Jordan in order to pour upon his head, or sprinkle on his face, he surely would never have been freed from his leprosy. God never deviates from his express will ; but *we* must train our own will to submit implicitly to the

command of God, however our reason, fancy, and taste may object. If, my brother, the Lord has expressly commanded you to be *immersed* in water in order rightly to comply with His commission, you ought to be immersed at once, if you wish to consider yourself as *duly baptized*.

To the testimonies of distinguished Pedobaptist divines previously quoted, we wish to add the following beautiful and expressive words.

ARCHIBALD HALL: "How grand and awful is that mighty preface to the institution of Christian baptism! Matt. xxviii. 18. Who is that daring, insolent worm, that will presume to dispute the authority, or change the ordinances of HIM, who is given to be Head over all things to the Church? The solemnity of this ordinance is complete: and all the purposes of its institution are secured by the authority and blessing of Christ. His laws are not subject to any of those imperfections which are attendants to the best-contrived systems among men, and frequently need explanations, amendments, and corrections. It is most dangerous and presumptuous to add any ceremony, or to join any service, on any pretense, unto Heaven's appointment."

## SECTION III.

### THE BAPTISM AT THE FEAST OF PENTECOST.

“Now when they had heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.” Acts ii. 37–42.

#### REMARKS.

Here we observe how the Apostle obeys his Lord’s direction in the commission. He does not make disciples by *first baptizing*, and *then teaching*; but he begins by preaching, and does not undertake to baptize till he finds, among his hearers, such as manifest tokens of repentance and faith. For it

reads, *first*, that the hearers of Peter were pricked in their heart, so that they must cry, "What shall we do?" *Secondly*, that they were exhorted to repent and be baptized, for the remission of their sins. *Thirdly*, that they who *gladly received* the word of the Apostle were baptized, and "were added to" (or joined) the church. Further, it is said of them who were thus baptized and connected with the church, that they "continued stedfast in the doctrines of the Apostles"—that is, earnestly and continually heard the preaching of the Apostles—"in fellowship,"—in the common, brotherly conversation, in constantly keeping themselves together in brotherly union—"in breaking of bread"—in the celebration of the Lord's supper—and "in prayers"—in *social* prayers.

Such was the order of the Apostolic church at Jerusalem—the true mother-church of all Christian churches, which should afterward be organized in the same way; for, without doubt, this is recorded for the instruction and pattern of Christians of all times.

From the 39th verse of our text, the Pedobaptists have endeavored to draw an evidence for infant baptism, and, in support of it, they generally quote, not the whole answer of Peter, but only a part of it, viz., "the promise is unto you and to your children;" and instead of explaining the nature of the promise, as the Apostle did, by referring to the prediction in Joel, it is generally referred to the prom-

ise made to Abraham, and to his seed. But a little consideration of the connection of this passage, will lead to the discovery that it has nothing to do with infant baptism. For, 1, the *promise* which is alleged is evidently none other than that the Apostle had just quoted from the Prophet Joel, v. 17–21, in which it is promised that the Lord, in the latter days, would pour out of His Spirit on all flesh, and that whosoever should call on the name of the Lord should be saved. “Repent,” says Peter, “and be baptized, and ye shall receive the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. For unto *you* is the promise which I have just recited.” 2. When it further reads, “and to your children, and all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,” it is to be observed, that the word “children” does not signify new-born children or infants, but *descendants*, in which sense the word children often occurs in Scripture. “Children,” in this place, corresponds to “sons” and “daughters” mentioned by the Prophet Joel, who would “prophesy” and “see visions.” This addition, “as many as the Lord our God shall call,” confines the fulfillment of the promise to such as, by the promulgation of the gospel, should be “called”—that is, effectually called, converted—to the participation of the New Testament graces. New-born children, therefore, cannot be included in that promise, because they cannot as such be said to be “called,” or converted by the call of the gospel. 3. If Peter had



meant to say that the promise quoted from Joel had included infants, then, even those, as well as the adults, should on that occasion have been baptized ; but that they were not baptized is evident, as it reads : “ They that *gladly received* his word ;” *they*—and none else—“ were baptized.” Not a word in the whole description of those who were baptized on that occasion, will apply to new-born children.

Again, from this passage they have endeavored to find out some objections against the true mode of baptism by immersion, considering it improbable that 3000 should have been immersed in water in one day, and that in Jerusalem should have been found sufficient conveniences to immerse so many.

In regard to the first objection, it is not said that 3000 were *baptized* in one day, but only that about 3000 souls *were added* to them the same day. But even were it said, it is not improbable that the twelve Apostles could have performed that act “ the same day ;” for if we divide 3000 persons among twelve, it gives them each only two hundred and fifty. And the baptism of these might well be performed in the long summer afternoon of Pentecost. But if we add to the twelve Apostles the other seventy, Luke x. 1, who, probably, were present, and had an equal right to baptize, there were on that occasion eighty-two administrators of baptism ; and this gives to each less than thirty-seven, who could easily be baptized in half an hour.

As to the second objection, there were in the Temple ample conveniences for immersion, and it does not appear that the disciples had yet been excluded from the privileges of the sacred place. Luke xxiv. 53. There were ten brass lavers, each of which held over nine barrels of water. Besides, there were at Jerusalem baths for immersion so numerous, that the digging of cisterns for such uses was a trade. It has also been shown by the most accurate travelers, both ancient and modern, that there were at least *six* public fountains and pools within a mile from the Temple, suitable for the immersion of large numbers at once.\*

#### TESTIMONIES.

DR. HAMMOND: "If any have made use of that very unconcludent argument, (referring to this passage, Acts ii. 39), I have nothing to say in defense of them. The word *children* there, is really the posterity of the Jews, and not peculiarly their infant children."†

LIMBORCH: By the Greek word *tekna*, the Apostles understand, not infants, but posterity; in which signification the word occurs in many places of the New Testament; see, among others, John viii. 39:

\* As to the supply of water at Jerusalem, see Rev. G. W. Samson's excellent treatise, in "The Design of Baptism, etc." By Ira Chase, D.D. Boston, 1851, pp. 111-136.

† Works, vol. i., p. 490.

“If ye were Abraham’s *children*, ye would do the works of Abraham.” Whence it appears, that the argument which is very commonly taken from this passage for the baptism of infants, is of *no force*, and *good for nothing*.”\*

\* Comment. *in loc.*



## SECTION IV.

### PHILIP BAPTIZING AT SAMARIA.

"THEN Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them; and the people, with one accord, gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. And there was great joy in the city. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts viii. 5, etc.

#### REMARKS.

Here we are informed that at Samaria both *men* and *women* were baptized, men and women being expressly and specially mentioned, but *children* are not mentioned. Were there no children, then, in Samaria? Or were there no children in the families of the converted. Those who can trace out such probabilities of there being children in the household of Lydia, most probably an unmarried woman,\* can they find no probability that there were children in the families of these baptized "*men and women*"?

\* See concerning Lydia, p. 9.

“Oh! no,” we hear them answer, “here were certainly no children;” for if they admit that there were children, the admission would furnish proof that children were *not* baptized.

Children are here excluded from baptism not only because the Holy Spirit has omitted to add to the “men and women” the word *children*, but because it is said of those who were baptized, that “they *believed* Philip.” Had it only been said, “When they heard Philip, they were baptized, men, women, and children,” there would have been, at least, some plausibility in pleading for the baptism of babes. Even then, however, it would have been incumbent on any one pleading for infant baptism from such language, to prove that these children, who are classed among them that heard, were unconscious babes. How careful, therefore, has the Holy Spirit here, as well as everywhere, been, not to furnish any support for infant baptism. If Philip in Samaria had baptized men, women, and children, the Holy Spirit, in order to complete the account, would have mentioned children; for we cannot imagine that *two* classes of them who were baptized would have been mentioned, and the *third* omitted.\*

\* Pedobaptist missionaries among the heathen in our times, are used to specify, in their accounts, even the children that are baptized. Thus, for instance, one writes: “During the year 1819, 20 adults and 21 children were baptized.” Another: “On the first Sunday of this month, I baptized 34 adults and *their children*, 48 in all.” Such accounts are quite natural where infant baptism prevails. See “Missionary Register” for the year 1821, pp. 19, 294.

But why are "men and women" here specified, if the Holy Spirit had not intended to render assurance still more sure? Had the account said nothing specially of the baptism of women, it would nevertheless have been naturally implied, inasmuch as the Commission, including all believing disciples, would have fully justified the baptism of women. But to render the thing the more sure, they also are expressly and specially mentioned. If, therefore, the Lord had intended to introduce infant baptism in His churches, would he have directed Luke expressly to mention the baptism of *men* and *women*, but not of *children*? How are we to account for this deficiency both here and everywhere in the New Testament? For how liberal are the Scriptures elsewhere in mentioning children? How often does it read, "Men, women, and *children*," even under circumstances far less important than here? \* Therefore, when, on the one hand, we see such an evident particularity in specially mentioning women, and, on the other hand, were Pedobaptism practiced, such an *evident deficiency*—the Holy Spirit having omitted entirely all mention of "*children*"—we conclude that the children on this occasion were not admitted to baptism, and that, consequently, infant baptism at that time was not practiced.

\* See, for instance, Numb. xvi. 27; xxxi. 9. Deut. ii. 34; iii. 6. 2 Chron. xx. 13. Neh. xii. 43. Jer. xli. 16; xliii. 6. Matt. xiv. 21; xv. 38; xviii. 25. Acts xxi. 5.



## SECTION V.

### THE BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the Eunuch said : ‘See, here is water ; what doth hinder me to be baptized ? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch : and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the Eunuch saw him no more. And he went on his way rejoicing.” Acts viii. 35–39.

#### REMARKS.

Here we learn that Philip, before he baptizes the Eunuch, holds forth this condition : “If thou believest with all thine heart.” Philip might have deemed the Eunuch—after having eagerly heard the Gospel which he preached to him on immediate divine direction—a proper subject for baptism.



Even his earnest request for it might have confirmed him in this opinion. But he cannot and dares not baptize him, until he openly professes to "*believe with all his heart;*" remembering, no doubt, that baptism was appointed only for *believing disciples* of Christ. Nothing can demonstrate more clearly than this, that a *declaration of faith* was *indispensably required previous to baptism*.

We also learn in what way Philip administered baptism. Philip, as bound by the Commission of Christ, had informed the Eunuch that whosoever had become a believer on Christ should also immediately be baptized; yet the Eunuch speaks not a word of being baptized, until he comes "to a certain water." This certainly implies that baptism here was performed by immersion. For if a handful of water had been sufficient, then the Eunuch had not needed to *wait* for baptism till he had discovered "a certain water;" for the travelers through those *deserts* (see Acts viii. 26,) were ordinarily amply furnished with vessels of water for their journeys, and there is not the least doubt that the noble Eunuch of the Queen Candace, on his long journey would have been supplied with such conveniences. Had it, therefore, at that time been customary to administer baptism only by *pouring* or *sprinkling*, the Eunuch would not have cried out from great joy, "See, here is water, what doth hinder?" Want of water *had* hindered his baptism, which could not possibly have happened, if

Philip, like our infant sprinklers, had believed and taught that "the validity of baptism does not at all depend on the quantity of water."

Further, it is to be observed that Philip and the Eunuch came to the water, while they yet were sitting in the chariot, *vv.* 36, 38. If baptism had not depended on the quantity of water, then it had been most natural, in this situation, to send one of the servants for a bowlful, instead of the Eunuch and Philip themselves alighting from the chariot in order to reach the water.

To these circumstances add, that the words used show that baptism was performed by immersion. For Philip, together with the Eunuch, did not only go *to* the water, in order there to place himself on the shore, and take a little water in his hand for pouring or sprinkling, but it reads that they "*went down* into the water," *v.* 38, as it is also afterward said that "*they came up out of* the water," *v.* 39. What would take them into the water, if a handful of water would suffice?

Let it be observed, also, that there is something very peculiar in the account of their going into the water. For it is not only said, "*they went into* the water," but our attention is fixed on the fact that they "*both*" went into the water. This, we might think, would suffice. Yet the Holy Spirit marks the circumstance still more precisely and adds, "*both Philip and the Eunuch.*" Can any one imagine that such a precision, such an apparent redundancy of

expression, is not designed to teach something that the Spirit of inspiration foresaw would be denied? Had the water been deep enough at the edge, the Eunuch *only* might have been in the water, and Philip standing on the margin might from thence have immersed him. But in this recorded case, both the baptizer and the candidate went *down into* the water. Would it have been necessary so circumstantially to inform us of this, if the Holy Spirit had not evidently designed to show us in what way baptism on that occasion was performed?

If we sum up all these circumstances, and also consider that the word *baptizo*, according to the testimonies of all linguists, ordinarily signifies to *immerse*, there can be no doubt that baptism on this occasion was performed by immersion. And if baptism on this occasion was performed by immersion, we also rightly conclude that it always must have been performed in the same way. For we must, undoubtedly, assume that as the Apostles had only "one Lord" and "one faith," as well as "one baptism" (Eph. iv. 5), so they also had only *one mode* to perform that baptism. We cannot imagine, that one would have baptized by sprinkling, another by pouring, a third by immersion, and that they, in different churches, had used different modes; for how would such a variety and inconsistency have been received by people who were accustomed so rigidly, precisely and consistently

to observe the injunctions of the Old Testament, while the Apostles all professed that they had one and the same Commission from one and the same Lord, to preach one and the same doctrine in all places?

#### TESTIMONIES.

DR. DODDRIDGE: "It would be very unnatural to suppose, that they went down to the water merely that Philip might take a little water in his hand to pour on the Eunuch. A person of his dignity had, no doubt, many vessels in his baggage, on such a journey, through a *desert* country; a precaution *absolutely necessary* for travelers in those parts, and *never omitted* by them."\*

DR. QUENSTEDT (Lutheran): "*Immersion* is similar to a burial, *emersion* to a resurrection. It reads, Acts viii. 38, 39, that Philip, together with the Eunuch, *went down into* the water, and baptized him there; and it is added that, after the act was performed, *they both* again came up out of the water. Both the Eastern and the Western church retained for a long time the use of *immersion*."†

CHR. STARKE (Lutheran): "And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they *went down both into the water*, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he

\* Family Expositor, *in loc.*

† Antiq. Bib. part 1, c. 4, sect. 2, num. 1.

(Philip) baptized him in the name of the triune God, by *immersion*.”\*

CALVIN : “ Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients, for they immersed the whole body in water.”†

\* Commentary on Acts viii. 38.

† Commentary on Acts viii. 38.

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## SECTION VI.

### THE BAPTISM OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

“AND Ananias went his way, and entered into the house ; and putting his hand on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.” Acts ix. 17. “And he said, the God of our Fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now, why tarriest thou ? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” xxii. 14–16. “And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales ; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.” ix. 18.

#### REMARKS.

The words of Ananias to Saul, “And now why tarriest thou ? Arise and be baptized,” should, as Luther expresses himself, “be written in letters so large as to fill heaven and earth.” For nothing in

our days is so neglected and contemned as true Christian baptism. Many Christians neglect it, as they imagine themselves to have been baptized in their childhood; others, because they fear men more than God, and prefer the praise of men to that of God. But such a neglect and contempt is most disparaging to the glory of God, and most injurious to the individual, and to Christendom in general. No Christian ought, therefore, to waive the subject, or give himself any rest, till he either can before God sincerely say, "I thank thee, O Lord, that I am rightly baptized," or until, on the other hand, he can testify that he has used every means in his power to discover and receive true baptism.

It has been argued that Ananias could not consider Paul to be a believer, previous to his baptism, as he said, "Arise, and wash away thy sins." But that there is no ground in these words for such a conclusion, is evident. For Saul had already received a new heart, and his enmity against the gospel had ceased. The roaring lion had been changed to an humble lamb. Saul, raging with murderous intent, had become a penitent suppliant, and received from the Lord himself this testimony, "Behold, he prayeth;" and his highest desire was to know what the Lord would have him to do. Acts ix. 6, 11. He had also already been declared to be a *chosen* vessel to the Lord (Acts ix. 15); whence Ananias calls him *brother*. He was, there-



fore, known to Ananias as one who had with his heart believed on Christ, and had obtained the forgiveness of sin.

How then, it may be asked, is this command to be understood, "Be baptized, and *wash away thy sins?*" Answer: It is true, the forgiveness of sin is here declared to be, in one way or another, connected with baptism. But how can any one wash away his sins, or obtain forgiveness of sin? Surely there is only one way, and that is by faith. As, therefore, forgiveness of sin, by the very form of language employed, is associated with baptism, so also must that faith without which forgiveness cannot be obtained, be understood to be associated with baptism. And as confession must follow faith, and yet is said to save (Rom. x. 9, 10), so baptism may follow faith, and yet be said to wash away sins. In both cases it is *faith alone* which justifies. In the one case *confession* is spoken of as the expression of saving faith, in the other case *baptism* is spoken of as its expression. In the one case the Apostle declares, virtually, that faith saves when it makes a man confess Christ; in the other, Ananias intimates that it would save when it led to *the particular mode* of confessing Christ, viz., *baptism*. For where true faith is, together with profession of it by baptism, there is salvation promised. See Mark xvi. 16.

It has been asserted that Paul could not have been immersed, because it is said that he "arose

and was baptized." Acts ix. 18. But no man of real scholarship and good sense will defend this assertion. Besides, Paul has told us himself how he was baptized, in Rom. vi. 3, as we shall see hereafter.

#### TESTIMONIES.

BURKITT: *Be baptized, and wash away thy sins.* As water cleanseth the body, so the blood of Christ, signified by water, washes away the guilt of the soul. Where true faith is, together with the profession of it by baptism, there is salvation promised. Mark xvi. 16: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved."\*

WOLF, on the words, "Calling on the name of the Lord:" "After thou hast called on and *confessed* the name of the Lord, as Messiah. *This must of old precede the holy act of baptism.*"†

\* Expository Notes on the New Testament, *in loc.*

† In H. A. W. Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament, on Acts xxii. 16.

## SECTION VII.

### THE BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS AND HIS FRIENDS.

“AND He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To Him give all the prophets witness, that, through His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” Acts x. 42-48.

#### REMARKS.

The order of the Commission is here also observed. Peter began by preaching; and never a word of baptism is found till the people had heard

the gospel, had received the Holy Spirit, spoken with tongues, and magnified God. Then, and not till then, Peter pleads for their baptism ; and what should be particularly observed, he pleads for it upon the ground of their being, most evidently, true believers, and as having received the Holy Ghost. His language, in verse 47, implies, that if they did not appear to be regenerate persons, any one might object to their baptism ; but, as they had given evidences that could not be disputed, he infers, no one could deny the propriety of their being baptized. Consequently, as evidently as words can express it, *professed believers only* were here baptized.



## SECTION VIII.

### THE BAPTISM OF LYDIA AND HER HOUSEHOLD.

“ON the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made ; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us ; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.” Acts xvi. 13-15.

#### REMARKS.

Before a Pedobaptist can urge this text in favor of his doctrine, the following points must first be certainly proved : That Lydia, at this time, or ever, had a husband. That she had children, and children then in infancy. That these children were with her at Philippi. And that such children were actually baptized.

On all this the Scriptures tell us nothing, and

all the circumstances speak against it. For with respect to the *first* point, it is not to be supposed, that Lydia ever had a husband, because she herself was engaged in business, for which she had been obliged to travel a great distance (she was "a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira"), and especially as such a husband never is mentioned, as it is distinctly said they came to the house of *Lydia*. Acts xvi. 40. *Secondly*, it is certain that thousands are married without having children; that thousands of households with children have none under the years of discretion; and that Lydia, if she had such children, most likely would have been unable to engage in business. With respect to the *third*, we consider that if Lydia had infants, she would scarcely have been able to take them along with her on such a long and troublesome journey; for we find from the text that Lydia had come from her home at Thyatira to sell purple, and for her business hired or bought a house at Philippi, which city was about three hundred miles distant from Thyatira. And as to the *fourth*, it cannot from the words "and her household" be inferred, that *all* in the house were baptized, even if, which is utterly impossible, all the three preceding points could be proved; for this and the like phrases include only *all who are properly qualified*. See, for instance, 1 Sam. i. 21-23, where it is related that Elkana went up, with "all his house," to offer unto the

Lord in Shiloh ; and yet Hannah, his wife, together with her infant son, remained home at Ramah.

It is likely that her house consisted of servants who assisted her in her business. These, or whosoever formed her household, must, through the preaching of Paul, have been led, together with herself, to believe on Christ. For according to the Commission, and the practice of the Apostles on all other occasions, none but those who were properly qualified, or believers, could have been baptized. As Cornelius "feared God with all his house" (Acts x. 2), as the nobleman at Capernaum "believed and his whole house" (John iv. 53), and as Crispus "believed on the Lord with all his house" (Acts xviii. 8), so it appears from the baptism of Lydia and her household, that she *with all her house believed*.





## SECTION IX.

### THE BAPTISM OF THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER.

“And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.” Acts xvi. 27-34.

### REMARKS.

'The jailer conducts Paul and Silas out from the inner prison, and asks, trembling, “Sirs, what

must I do to be saved?" To this he receives a direct answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." By this answer it cannot be meant that the household of the jailer should be saved only through his own faith; but, if *they* also believed, they should be entitled to the same spiritual and everlasting blessings with himself; which Paul might the rather add, as it is probable that many of them at the great earthquake (see Acts xvi. 26) might have attended the master of the family into the dungeon.

The text most clearly represents the household of the jailer as a believing house, by first saying that Paul and Silas "spoke the word of the Lord unto him, and to *all that were in his house*;" and further that the jailer "*rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.*" If, therefore, children were to be found in this house, the text certainly speaks only of such children as could hear, perceive, and believe the preaching of the Gospel. None can reasonably say that new-born children were among those that heard "the word of the Lord" and "believed in God." Now, all who had heard and believed the word of the Lord were baptized, but no others. For as, in the first place, it reads, "They spake the word of the Lord unto all that were in his house," so it reads, in the second place, "He was baptized, he and all his." The one expression extends just as far as the other.

In our text nothing is specified in regard to the

*mode.* But the very word *baptizo*, signifying the act of baptism, teaches us that even here, as everywhere, *immersion* was practiced. To this no obstacle was to be found in the circumstances. For in the first place, the river Strymon ran close by, and nothing militates against the supposition that the jailer might have been baptized in this river. For on a closer consideration of the text, all appears to have taken place in the following order. First, the jailer brought Paul and Silas out of the "inner prison," and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" v. 30. Then he brought them into his house; for it is added that "they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." v. 32. Next "he took them," or as it may read, according to the original, "took them aside," and "washed their stripes." But whither did he take them aside, in order to wash their stripes? Probably to a near water. There he also might, "straightway the same hour of the night," have been baptized, and all his. v. 33.\* Finally, he again brought them home, or rather *up† to his*

\* On this verse the Lutheran Superintendent, Dr. H. A. W. MEYER, makes the following remark: "*Paralabon autous—eleusen*; he took them aside and washed. A graphic representation. He probably brought them to a near water, where the baptism of the jailer and his household was then immediately performed."—Commentary on the New Testament.

† "The office-house of the jailer is to be thought of as built above the prisons."—Meyer.

house, and entertained them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. v. 34.

If the baptism of the jailer and his household had been performed by pouring a little water, or sprinkling, it would have been better to remain within the house in the dead hour of the night, than to go out. Thus every circumstance goes to prove that baptism was administered either in the river Strymon, or some pool, or other reservoir of water. There could not be any want of conveniences for immersion, as it is known that, at this time and place, every public building was provided with water reservoirs. Therefore, it is also the opinion of the celebrated Grotius, that the baptism in question was performed in the bath connected with the prison-house, over which the jailer had superintendence. The circumstances, therefore, on that occasion, are so far from rendering baptism by immersion improbable, that, on the contrary, they imperatively demand it.

Finally, even here, we learn how intimately baptism was connected with faith in Christ, that it must take place *straightway, the same hour of the night*, and could not be deferred to a more convenient time; whence also hospitality must be postponed in behalf of this holy act. This should teach every believer, who is convinced of his not being yet rightly baptized, not to put off this important and necessary duty.

## SECTION X.

### PAUL BAPTIZING AT CORINTH.

“CRISPUS, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized.” Acts xviii. 8. “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gains. Lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.” 1 Cor. i. 13-17. “Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.” xvi. 15.

### REMARKS.

The assurance of Paul that he was not sent to baptize, but to *preach the gospel*, exposes in the strongest light the fatal error of those who speak of discipling by baptism. For while our opponents insist, that Christ ordered his eleven Apostles to disciple all nations by baptizing them; he who

labored more abundantly than they all tells us, that he was *not sent*, comparatively speaking, to *baptize* even those that believed. Consequently, he was not sent to make disciples in that way for which our opposers plead, but by *preaching the gospel*. Nay, so far from thinking it would have been his happiness to have made a multitude of the Corinthians disciples by baptizing them, he thanks God he had baptized but very few; and this he does while claiming the honor of having been the favored instrument of converting a great part of those that were saints in the city of Corinth. See 1 Cor. iv. 15. It seems, therefore, as if Paul had not learned that easy and expeditious way of making disciples, for which our brethren contend.

Although only Crispus is here said to have been baptized, and nothing is mentioned concerning the baptism of his household, yet the conclusion is necessary that his household also was baptized; for it is said that "Crispus believed on the Lord, *with all his house*." This passage reflects a clear light on the house of Lydia, which is related to have been baptized, without any express mention of their *faith*. For if any one, from the fact that the house of Lydia is not expressly said to have been believing, would infer that the baptism of her household was a necessary consequence of *her* faith, without their own, one may say, on the same principle, that *Crispus only* was baptized; because it is, indeed, stated that he "believed on the Lord *with all his*

house," and nothing is said of the baptism of the household, but only of that of Crispus. But that the household also was baptized, is certain, because the Lord has *commanded* to baptize *believers*. In the same way you may also infer that, when the house of Lydia is said to have been baptized, but nothing is expressly mentioned concerning the faith of the baptized persons, they, however, must have believed, because the Commission authorizes the baptism of none but believers.

Finally, as to the house of Stephanas (the last one who is said, in Scripture, to have been baptized), even this is evidently represented as *believing*. For it is said, that this house was "the first fruits" of the word in Achaia, and that "they" (the members of the same house) "have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." They were the first household that had been converted to Christ in this district, and the whole family exerted themselves in acts of zeal and charity in reference to their fellow Christians, especially the poorer or more afflicted, so that there was not a member of the whole house that did not partake in it. Nor can any reply that possibly they were baptized in infancy, but had now grown to manhood; for only five years had elapsed from Paul's first entrance into Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital. Hence it appears, the *baptized* household here also was a *believing* household.



## SECTION XI.

### REFLECTION ON THE BAPTISM OF HOUSEHOLDS.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

Now we have examined all the places in the New Testament where *whole households* are said to have been baptized, and as we have nowhere previously found any instance of infant baptism, so neither in the accounts of the baptism of the households now under consideration. Had it been the constant practice of the Apostles to baptize infants together with their parents, we should have reason to expect, and, no doubt, should have found, in various places of Scripture, baptisms of children mentioned, as well as of adults, because we elsewhere in Scripture very often find children specially mentioned with the adults, as has before been shown.\* Yea, we infer that this must have been a fact in *many* instances, because we find in the New Testament many thousands of adults believing and being baptized. See Acts ii. 41 ; iv. 4 ; v. 14, &c.

While Pedobaptists must concede that from the baptized households mentioned in the New Testament no conclusive argument can be drawn in favor

\* See p. 73.

of infant baptism, they allege in self-defence that we are bound to show that *no* children in those households were baptized, before we are authorized to reject infant baptism : and the more so, as, in the instances of baptized households, children are not *expressly excluded* from baptism.

To this we answer in the *first* place : On *us* no such duty is incumbent ; for we have already shown, from the Commission, *who* are to be baptized, and so far as we are concerned it is sufficient to prove that the baptism of households is not opposed to our explanation of the Commission, on which we chiefly rest our argument. If we were bound to prove, by special examples, the falsehood of all errors, it would lead to the grossest absurdities. Thus, for instance, it would be our duty by special examples to prove that the Apostles did *not* give the Lord's supper to new-born children, a custom still observed by a great many Pedobaptists.

On the contrary, as it is conceded by all, that believers' baptism is instituted by the Lord ; and, as a ground for another baptism, viz., infant baptism, is sought by Pedobaptists, it is their imperative duty to exhibit some divine commandment to baptize new-born children ; for such can by no means be included in the Commission. But if they are not able to do this—as they certainly never will be—and, in default of positive command, are anxious to find, in any *example* of Scripture, a support for their practice, that example, at least, must be dis-

tinct, so that every one may say : Behold, here we have now a clear proof that the Apostles also were accustomed to baptize new-born children. If they cannot do this, and are compelled to concede that it is *uncertain* whether infants were baptized by the Apostles or not, then their house is built on the sand—they rest only on vain human imaginations.

To the objection before stated that, as the children are not *expressly excepted*, it is thence to be inferred that they also were baptized, we answer in the *second* place : The narrative needs not expressly to except them, as none but believers are included in the Commission, according to which, every baptism in all times ought to be administered. If the Commission does not include new-born children, are they not in the baptism of households always necessarily to be excluded ? No truth can be more evident than that the baptism of the households, so often mentioned, contains no evidence for infant baptism.

When Pedobaptists object to us that we, according to our views, scarcely would be able, with Paul, to baptize whole households, we answer : We now find that as often as whole households believe among us, whole households are baptized ; and it is by no means uncommon for Baptist missionaries and preachers *actually to baptize whole households*—as may be abundantly seen in the Journals of the denomination.

## TESTIMONIES.

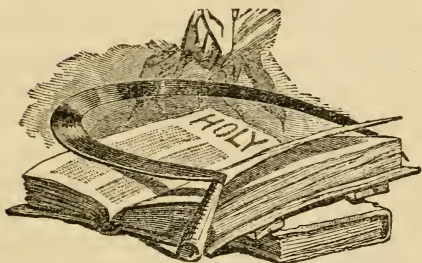
DR. A. NEANDER: "The practice of infant baptism was remote from this (Apostolical) age. From the examples of household baptism, infant baptism can by no means be inferred; for the passage, 1 Cor. xvi. 15, shows the incorrectness of such a conclusion. It is there made evident that the whole family of Stephanas baptized by Paul, consisted purely of adults. Not only the late appearance of any express mention of infant baptism, but the long continued opposition to it leads to the conclusion that it was not of Apostolical origin."\*

DR. H. A. W. MEYER: "Appeal is made to these passages, Acts xvi. 15, 33; xviii. 8; and to 1 Cor. i. 16, in order to prove the custom of infant baptism in the Apostolic age, or at least, to show its probability, but without reason. For *that the baptism of children was not in use at that time* appears evidently from 1 Cor. vii. 14, where Paul could not have written, '*Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy,*' if the children had been ecclesiastically holy by virtue of their baptism, and not only of their relation to the Christian parents. Hence, if there were children in the families mentioned in the Acts, and in 1 Cor. i. 16, who were incapable of attaining to a perception of faith by means of instruction, we must decide that

\* Neander's Apostolic Age, vol. i., p. 140.

they were excluded from the baptism which the other members of the household received. The readers understood that exclusion as a matter of course, since they knew the custom was *not to baptize little children*.”\*

\* Commentary on the New Testament, on Acts xvi. 15.



## SECTION XII.

### BAPTISM OF TWELVE DISCIPLES AT EPHEBUS.

“AND it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.”—Acts xix. 1.

#### REMARKS.

That the twelve disciples here mentioned were rebaptized by Paul is evident from the original, and is conceded by most commentators in our time.

That these disciples were not previously baptized by John the Baptist, or with his true baptism, may

be concluded from the following reasons: 1. The question of Paul, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost"—that is, the extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit, which, in the Apostolic age, was imparted in connection with baptism—"since ye believed?" obviously implies that, in his apprehension, their conversion was of recent date, at least subsequent to the effusion of the Holy Spirit at the season of Pentecost. 2. The remarks of Paul in v. 4, respecting what John taught "the people," are most naturally understood as addressed to such as had never enjoyed John's personal instruction. 3. The ignorance of those men respecting the Holy Spirit, does not accord with the supposition that they had been instructed and baptized by John, in whose preaching the Holy Spirit held a prominent place. Comp. Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; John i. 33. These disciples lived about nine hundred miles from the district where John baptized, and it was more than *twenty* years since the ministry of John had ceased. 5. The Scriptures nowhere teach that any of John's disciples, as such, had a right to baptize, especially after the ministry of John had ceased, and the Lord had commanded His Apostles to baptize in the name of the Holy Trinity. The text does not say that the twelve disciples were baptized *with*, but "*unto*" the baptism of John, that is, unto the observance of what this baptism required.

These disciples were, consequently, rebaptized, not because the baptism of John was not valid as Christian baptism, but because they had not received



the true baptism of John, and were deficient in their knowledge of the doctrine of salvation.

That, however, these men believed on Christ, and after further instruction, were proper subjects of true baptism, is evident, partly because they are called "disciples," that is, disciples of Christ, v. 1 ; partly because Paul considered them as Christians who *believed*, v. 2 ; and partly because, as soon as they had received true baptism, they also received the extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit, so that they spoke with tongues and prophesied, v. 6.

By what authority the Baptists are branded with the name of "Anabaptists," or rebaptizers, we may learn from this passage. Paul did not here perform an actual *rebaptism*, inasmuch as the irregular baptism which the twelve disciples previously had received, could not be accounted as a real baptism. And still less do the Baptists perform a *rebaptism*, in baptizing those who in their infancy have been sprinkled or poured. For if Paul rightly considered the irregular baptism of the twelve disciples as a nullity, still more reason do we have so to consider the baptism of infants. The former had, indeed, *some* knowledge of the doctrine of salvation ; these have *none at all*. The former are, indeed, said to have been "disciples," and to have "believed ;" of the latter the Scriptures are in this respect entirely silent. The former must also have received the true form of baptism, by immersion of the whole body ; but the latter, in most instances, have never received the ordinance in this form.

## SECTION XIII.

PASSAGES IN THE EPISTLES WHICH CONTAIN AN EXPRESS ALLUSION TO THE MODE AND THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM.

“KNOW ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Rom. vi. 3, 4.

“Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the Dead.” Col. ii. 12.

### REMARKS.

Baptism is here by the Apostle compared with a burial. In the one passage the Christians are said to be buried with Christ *by* baptism, and in the other, “buried with Him *in* baptism.” As Christ was laid in the grave, and a stone was placed at its entrance, so that the body of Christ was covered and hidden from the eyes of men; so the candidate

as a believer in fellowship with Christ, is laid in the water and covered by it. And again, as Christ was raised up from the grave by the glory of the Father; so the baptized believer is raised from the watery grave, to walk in newness of life. Baptism, administered by immersion, is, consequently, a significant emblem of our fellowship of spirit with Christ both in his death and resurrection. No other mode of baptism would have been a proper emblem of this burial and resurrection. If, for instance, baptism had consisted in washing, pouring or sprinkling, Paul never could have spoken of burial *by* or *in* baptism, as there would have been no resemblance between such an application of water and a burial, and, consequently, it would not have been proper to hold forth baptism as an emblem of burial. But between *immersion* in water and a *burial* is an obvious resemblance; whence also the Holy Spirit has used the act of baptism as a beautiful and proper emblem of our burial and resurrection with Christ.

Against those who suppose that the burial here mentioned has no reference to baptism, but is a mere spiritual act in the soul, it may be observed that the Apostle expressly says, that we are buried "*by* baptism" and "*in* baptism," not only by faith. The supposition that here is meant only a *spiritual burial* is, therefore, directly opposed to the clear meaning of the word of God, which teaches that the baptized is buried *by* and *in* the act of baptism.

The Apostle had previously spoken of the internal change of man by faith in Christ, as a death to sin (v. 2) ; here he speaks of the profession of Christ and of His death by the external act of baptism, as the visible exponent of our vital faith.

Here, consequently, we have an important explanation of the true import of the word *baptizo* [immerse], as well as of the necessity and design of "*going down into*," and "*coming up out of the water*"—of baptizing in the Jordan, and where "*there was much water*"—phrases which we find in connection with baptism. We here find God's own explanation of His own Commission concerning baptism, and herein we have to admire His wisdom and goodness. The mass of readers do not understand the original of the Bible; and the controversies of the learned concerning its true meaning often hide the light of truth from their eyes. But the light from these passages cannot be hid—it is obvious to every simple and unprejudiced mind; and the words "*buried with Christ by baptism*," may continue to make, as a Pedobaptist writer says they have heretofore made, "more Baptists than any other passage in the Bible." Through this commentary of the the Apostle, the Spirit of God enables every one to judge for himself in this matter. While the learned are contending about the meaning of the word *baptizo*, etc., let the unlearned turn to these Scriptural allusions to the ordinance, and he will be enabled

clearly and distinctly to see what meaning the Holy Spirit Himself has attached to the act of baptism.

#### TESTIMONIES.

DR. A. THOLUCK: "For the explanation of the figurative description of the baptismal rite, it is necessary to call the attention to the well-known circumstance, that, in the early days of the church, persons, when baptized, were first *plunged below*, and then *raised above* the water, to which practice, according to the direction of the Apostle, the early Christians gave a symbolic import. . . . In the same sense Chrysostom, on the third chapter of John, observes: For when we *sink our heads in the water*, as if it were in a tomb, the old man is buried, and *going down is hidden entire and at once*."\*

DR. MATTHIES: "Paul, in speaking of Rom. vi. 3, &c., as we have seen, has in his mind only the rite of *immersing* and *emerging*, and in the Apostolic church, in order that a communion with the death of Christ might be signified, *the whole body* of the person to be baptized was *immersed* in the water or river; and then, in order that a connection with the resurrection of Christ might be indicated, *the body again emerged*, or was raised out of the water. *That this rite has been changed is indeed to be lamented, for it placed before the*

\* "Exposition of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans." Philadelphia, 1844.

*eyes, most aptly, the symbolical meaning of baptism.*"\*

ROSENMULLER: "*Immersion in the water of baptism and coming forth out of it, was a symbol of a person's renouncing the old life, and, on the contrary, beginning a new one. The learned have rightly reminded us that on account of this emblematical meaning of baptism, the rite of immersion ought to have been retained in the Christian church.*"†

CH. STARKE: "The Apostle has reference to the then prevailing custom, according to which the candidate *was* entirely immersed in water, and after he had been left under it a little while, was again taken up out of it. Baptism, consequently, does not only contain the image and power of the death of Christ, but of his burial; so that, as the Lord by his burial has done away with the curse that lay upon him, we also might be partakers of his burial, *when we are laid down under the water, as in a grave, and covered with it.*"‡

DR. WHITBY: "It being so expressly declared here, Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12, that we are *buried* with Christ in baptism, by being buried under water; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to His death by dying to sin, being taken hence; and *this immersion being religiously*

\* *Expositio Baptismi Bibl. Hist. & Dogm.*, p. 116.

† *Scholia in Novum Testam.*, vol. 3, p. 454, on Rom. vi. 4.

‡ *Commentary on Rom. vi. 4.*

*observed by all Christians for thirteen centuries, and approved by our Church (the English Episcopal), and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the Author of this institution, or any license from any Council of the Church, being that which the Romanist still urges to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity; it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use.\**

RICHARD BAXTER: "It is commonly confessed by us to Baptists (as our Commentators declare) that in the Apostles' time the baptized *were dipped over head in water*; and that this signified their profession both of believing the burial and resurrection of Christ, and of their own present renouncing the world and flesh, or dying to sin and living to Christ, or rising again to newness of life, or being buried and risen again with Christ, as the Apostle expoundeth baptism in Col. ii. 12, and Rom. vi. 4."†

JOHN WESLEY: "*Buried with Him*—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by *immersion*."‡

\* Commentary on the New Test., on Rom. vi. 4.

† Paraph. on New Test. Dissert.

‡ Commentary on the N. Test., on Rom. vi. 4.



## SECTION XIV.

PASSAGES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WHERE THE  
WORD BAPTIZO OCCURS IN A FIGURATIVE SENSE.

*A.—Christ represents His sufferings under the  
Figure of a Baptism.*

"BUT Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able. And He said unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Matt. xx. 22, 23.

"But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Luke xii. 50.

### REMARKS.

To enter into great sorrows and afflictions is often expressed in Scripture under the figure of *immersion in water*. Thus the Prophetic word repre-

sents Christ as *immersed in deep waters*. Ps. lxix. 2, 3. Likewise the sufferings of the church are represented under the same figure. Ps. cxxiv. 4, 5. Now we ask, Which image does more perfectly correspond to the severity of the sufferings of Christ, the sprinkling of a few drops of water on the face, three handfull poured on the head, or *immersion into deep water*? Whosoever knows the history of the sufferings of Christ, will concede that he was entirely *immersed into his deep distress* and severe sufferings as a man that sinks "into deep waters, where the floods overflow" him. Ps. lxix. 2.

#### TESTIMONIES.

DR. DODDRIDGE: "Are you able to drink of the bitter cup of which I am now about to drink so deep, and to be baptized with the baptism, and plunged into that sea of sufferings with which I am shortly to be baptized, and, as it were, *overwhelmed* for a time?" "Verily I must be baptized with the most terrible baptism, and know that I soon shall be, as it were, *bathed* in blood and *plunged* into the most overwhelming distress."\*

OTTO VON GERLACH: "The cup signifies a great assigned measure of sufferings, and alludes, perhaps, especially to the severe sufferings of Christ previous to the crucifixion; *baptism* is still more: a com-

\* "Family Expositor," on the passages above.

*plete immersion* therein, His sanguinary death." Ps. xlii. 8; lxix. 2; cxxiv. 4, 5.\*

*B.—Baptism in the Holy Spirit.*

We quote, according to Dr. George Campbell's renowned translation of the New Testament, some of the passages where baptism *in* the Holy Spirit is mentioned.

"I, indeed, baptize you *in* water, that ye may reform; but he who cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you *in* the Holy Spirit and fire." Matt. iii. 11.

"I, indeed, have baptized you in water; but He will baptize you *in* the Holy Spirit." Mark i. 8.

"I, indeed, baptize *in* water; but one mightier than I cometh, whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to untie, He will baptize you *in* the Holy Spirit and fire." Luke iii. 16.

"For my part, I should not have known Him, had not He who sent me to baptize *in* water told me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining, the same is he who baptizeth *in* the Holy Ghost." John i. 33.

REMARKS.

It has, certainly, not escaped the attention of our readers, that in *all* these passages, according to the translation of Dr. Campbell, mention is made of a

\* Exposition of the New Test., on Matt. xx. 22.

baptism "*in* the Holy Spirit," and not "*with* the Holy Spirit," as we read in our common translation. This translation of Dr. Campbell is also, without contradiction, the only true one.

This fact—that in the original, constantly and uniformly, mention is made of a baptism "*in*," and not "*with*" the Holy Spirit—is strongly opposed to the supposition of those who, from the so-called "Spirit-baptism," seek an occasion to defend *pouring* instead of *immersion* at baptism. For this mode of speech indicates that the Apostles and the primitive Christians had not merely a very little measure of the Holy Spirit poured upon them, but that they were *immersed* in a flood of the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit, just as we immerse an empty vessel in the water, so that it is completely filled. This, and nothing else, is signified by the phrases to be baptized *in* the Holy Spirit and *filled* with the Spirit.

To this the objection is usually made, that, when the Holy Spirit in Scripture is often said to be poured out, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in such a powerful and extraordinary manner, took place on the day of Pentecost, and generally during the Apostolic age, this outpouring of the Holy Spirit must be the same as baptism in the Holy Spirit. And as this Spirit-baptism took place by means of the *outpouring* of the Holy Spirit, the consequence must be that the word *baptizo* is used to signify *pour*.

To this objection it may be briefly answered—That the Scriptures often speak of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, is indeed true. But thence it does in nowise follow that the outpouring of the Spirit and baptism in the Spirit are one and the same thing. The Scriptures nowhere teach it; whence we also have no right to interchange and confound these two distinct ideas. The outpouring of the Spirit is one act, and baptism in the already outpoured Spirit is another. Thus, at the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost the whole house, where the Apostles were sitting, was filled with a sound of a rushing mighty wind—an emblem of the Holy Spirit, John iii. 8—and this sound was accompanied with cloven tongues like as of fire. But this emblematic outpouring of the Spirit, which could both be seen and heard (Acts ii. 33), was yet only a *preparation* for *baptism* in the Holy Spirit. For first *after* this preparation baptism in the Holy Spirit followed, which is signified by these words: “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Apostles were now *immersed* in the light and power of the Holy Spirit.

#### TESTIMONIES.

DR. H. A. W. MEYER: “The Holy Spirit, so far as He, as real Spirit, *filled* those assembled Apostles, must be discerned from the symbol. . . . After these *outward* appearances followed the simultaneous *inward* filling (they were *all* filled) of all

the company with the Holy Spirit, whence the immediate consequence was, 'They began to speak with other tongues.'\*

DR. A. NEANDER: "After him (John) should He come who would be so highly elevated above him, that he not so much as felt worthy to show him the meanest slave-service. *He* was the same that would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire, that is, as they that were baptized by him were *totally immersed in the water*, so would Messiah *totally immerse* the souls of those that entered into fellowship with Him, in the Divine Spirit of life that he would impart unto them, so that they would be *totally penetrated therewith*."†

BISHOP HOPKINS: "They who are baptized with the Holy Spirit are, as it were, *plunged* into the heavenly flame, whose penetrating power devours all their dross and filthiness from below."‡

CYRIL, BISHOP OF JERUSALEM§ (A. D. 386): "As he who plunges into the waters and is baptized, is encompassed on all sides by the waters, so were the Apostles also baptized completely by the Holy Spirit." . . . . "It filled the house where they were sitting; for the house became the vessel of the spiritual water; as the disciples sat within, the whole

\* Commentary on the N. Test., on Acts ii. 3, 4.

† The Life of Christ.

‡ Works, p. 519.

§ Chrysostomi Hom. xi. in Cor., et Cyrilli Catechesis xvii. § 14. Paris, 1720.

house was filled. Thus they were entirely baptized—invested soul and body with a divine and saving garment.”\*

*C.—Baptism prefigured by the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the Red Sea and under the Cloud.*

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

#### REMARKS.

He who does not know the important fact to which the Apostle here alludes, would do well to peruse Exod. xiv., where it is narrated. From this chapter we see that the Israelites descended into the midst of the Red Sea; that the water divided, opening a passage for them, raising itself on both sides as a wall, so that they could walk on dry ground through the sea. Likewise we see that the cloud which followed the Israelites concealed them entirely from their enemies; that it was bright, and gave light to the former while it was darkness toward the latter. It does not appear that any water actually touched the Israelites in any sense whatever; and hence the word “baptized” must be used

\* Chrysostomi Hom. xi. in Cor., et Cyrilli Catechesis xvii. § 14. Paris, 1720.



by the Apostle in a *figurative* sense. Then the only question that arises is, whether the situation of the Israelites "*in the cloud and in the sea*" better agrees to sprinkling or pouring with some little water, or a total immersion and burial in it. The following renowned Pedobaptists will answer.

#### TESTIMONIES.

WHITSIUS: "How are the Israelites baptized in the cloud and in the sea, seeing they were neither immersed in the sea nor wetted by the cloud? It is to be considered that the Apostle here uses the term 'baptism' in a *figurative* sense, yet there is some agreement to the external sign. The sea is water, and a cloud differs but little from water. The cloud hung over their head, and the sea surrounded them on each side; and so does the water in regard to those that are baptized."\*

GATAKER: "As in the Christian rite the candidates are covered with water, and, as it were, are buried therein; and again, when they come out, rise as it were out of a grave, so it might seem as if the Israelites, when they went through the water of the sea, which was higher than their heads, were covered with it and as buried therein; and again, as if they emerged and arose when they ascended on the opposite shore."†

\* Œcon. Fœd., l. 4, c. 10, § 11.

† Adversar. Miscel.. cap. iv.

## SECTION XV.

PASSAGES WHERE THE WORD BAPTIZO OCCURS IN A LITERAL IMPORT WITHOUT REFERENCE TO CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

“Then came together unto Him the Pharisees and certain of the Scribes who came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of cups and pots,” &c. Mark vii. 1, 4, 8.

“And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him; and He went in and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner.” Luke xi. 37, 38.

“Which stood only in meats and drinks, and  
(123)

divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." Heb. ix. 10.

#### REMARKS.

The defenders of sprinkling or pouring at—or rather, instead of—baptism, have urged these passages to prove that the Lord in his Commission has not commanded immersion, but left it undecided in what manner the water might be applied in baptism. They have supposed that the words *baptizo* and *baptismos*, which here occur, do not signify *immersion*, but only *washing* with water.

These passages, however, duly considered according to the original, are so far from being in opposition to our doctrine concerning the only right mode, that they, on the contrary, strongly confirm it. For if, in the first place, we examine Mark vii. 1–4, according to the context, we find, v. 3, that the Pharisees *usually* did not eat unless they had washed their hands. This washing of the hands is in the Greek signified by the word *nipto*, which means to wash. But then it is mentioned in v. 4, as something especial and singular that, when they had come from the market—where they might have touched things that were defiling according to the law—they also did not eat, unless they had performed something else that in the Greek is signified by the word *baptizontai*, and in our version is rendered “they wash,” but ought rightly to have been

rendered "they have been immersed." Here, consequently, we find a difference of circumstances that occasioned two different acts, which in the original are denoted by two different words, viz., *nipto* and *baptizo*. Now we ask, what necessity constrains us here to discard the true meaning of *baptizo*, which is to *immerse*, and in its stead use the same word *wash* for the two different Greek words descriptive of two different ceremonies?

On this question we observe: 1. It has always been a general custom in the East for men to bathe themselves before eating, when they have been out on their business and affairs. 2. It was expressly commanded in the law that the children of Israel should bathe in water, so often as they had become unclean in the sense of the law. See Lev. xv. and Numb. xix. 3. The text tells us that the Pharisees did more than the law required, so that they even when they had been at home would not eat, unless they had washed their hands; but when they had been out to market, where they might have become polluted, they did not eat, unless they had bathed, or been *immersed in water* (*baptisontai*). 4. It is also said, that the Pharisees did this thing to keep "the tradition of the elders." If we, therefore, know what "the tradition of the elders" required, we have a plain exposition of our passage. Of this we are informed by Maimonides, a highly celebrated Jewish Rabbi of the 12th century, who very carefully compiled the written stat-

utes of the Jews. He says, "Generally, whenever in the law washing of the flesh or of the clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else than *the dipping of the whole body in a laver*; for if any man dips himself all over, except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness." . . . . "If the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people they were defiled, all one as if they had touched a profluous person, and needed *immersion*; and were obliged to it; hence, when they walked the street they walked on the side of the way, that they might not be defiled by touching the common people." . . . . "In a laver, which holds forty seahs of water, every defiled man dips himself."\*—A testimony confirmed both by the Talmud—a book containing the doctrines and laws of the Jews—and by the hereditary custom of the Jews, which is still observed.

Thus all things most clearly support the position that the word *baptizo* here, as everywhere, does not mean *wash*, but *immerse*.

What is said concerning the true meaning of *baptizo* in this passage, holds good also with reference to the same word in Luke xi. 33. Even there has *baptizo* been incorrectly translated by *wash*, and ought to be rendered by *immerse*. The Lord

\* Maimonides in Misn. Chagiga, c. 2, § 7. Hilchoth Mikva, c. 1, § 2. Hileh. Mikvaot, c. 9, § 5. Hileh. Abot Tiemaot, c. 13, § 8. Comp. Dr. Lightfoot's Horæ. Hebr. & Talmud, on Matt. iii. 6.

Jesus—as the former part of the chapter shows—had just been among the multitude; whence the Pharisees marvelled that He did not, according to their custom, first *immerse himself* (*ebaptisthe*), before He went to eat.

Just as we have no reason to translate *baptizo* by *wash*, so we have none to render its derivative *baptismos*—occurring in Mark vii. 4, 8, and Heb. ix. 10—by “*washing*,” as is done in our Bible. For, 1, the law of Moses, Lev. xi. 32, required that all kinds of unclean vessels should be put into water, &c. 2. The above named Maimonides says, touching the custom of the Pharisees, “They dip all unclean vessels.” . . . . “All such vessels must be dipped before they were used.” . . . . “He that buys a vessel for the use of a feast, of Gentiles, whether molten vessels or glass, they dip them in the waters of the laver, and after that may eat and drink in them.”\* With which testimony again both the Talmud and the present custom of the Jews correspond.

Many have thought it unlikely, that “tables” mentioned Mark vii. 4, could have been immersed. But this is just as plain as the other. *Baptizo*, as we have seen, means *immerse*. If it meant *sprinkle* or *pour*, it might sometimes be applied to things not capable of immersion. This, however, is never the case; and in the instance before us

\* Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 9. Hilch. Maacolat As. c. 17.

here there is not the least difficulty in assigning the word its real meaning. The tables here mentioned were very different from our tables. *Jahn*, in his *Christian Archæology*, ch. ix., describes them thus: "The table in the East, is a piece of round leather, spread upon the floor, upon which is placed a sort of stool. This supports nothing but a platter. The seat was the floor, spread with a mattress, carpet or cushion, upon which those who ate sat with legs bent and crossed. They sat in a circle round the piece of leather, with the right side toward the table, so that one might be said to lean upon the bosom of another."\*

These tables, together with the mattresses or cushions, might easily be defiled in the sense of the law, and needed, therefore, as often as this happened, according to the traditions of the Pharisees, to undergo a ceremonial cleansing by means of *immersion*. With regard to such a cleansing, *Maimonides* writes again: "A bed that is wholly defiled, if he dip it part by part, it is pure. What shall he do with a pillow or a bolster of *skin*? He must dip them and lift them up by their fringes."†

If, however, any suppose the tables here mentioned to be of wood, the traditionary law is equally express. "Every vessel of wood," says *Maimo-*

\* On the quality of these tables, see further *Dr. Lightfoot's Harmony of the Four Evangelists*, on *John ii.* Also *H. A. W. Meyer's Commentary*, on *Mark vii. 4.*

† *Hilchoth Cailim*, c. 1, § 14.



nides, "which is made for the use of man, as a *table*, or a *bed*, receives defilement. . . And these were washed *by covering them in water*."\*

## TESTIMONIES.

DR. H. A. W. MEYER (on Mark vii. 4): "Thereby *baptizontai* is not to be understood of washing the hands, but of immersion, which the word, both in the classic† Greek and in the New Testament, *always* signifies, that is, here according to the context, *take a bath*. Likewise also in Luke xi. 38. Returned from market, where they among the throng might have had defiling contacts, they eat not, unless they first have *bathed*. The representation is climacteric. Before eating they *always* observe the washing of the hands, but *the bathing when they come from market, and wish to eat*." . . . . (On Luke xi. 38) "Jesus had just come from the crowd, yea, He had just cast out a devil, v. 14. Therefore they expected that He before breakfast would first cleanse himself by *immersion*, that is, by a bath." . . . . (On the word *baptismous* in Mark vii. 4, 8) "*Baptismous* is likewise to be understood of rinsing by *immersion*."‡

Where our version in Heb. ix. 10, has "divers

\* Hileh. Cailim, c. 4. Mism. Mikvaot, c. 9.

† That is, the Greek as it is found in distinguished profane authors among the old Greeks.

‡ Meyer's Commentary on the passages above.

washings," Luther has correctly translated the same words of the original by "*manifold immersions*" (mancherley taufen), which were the manifold immersions of persons, clothes, and utensils, required by the law.

That *baptizo* in the passages above signifies *immerse*, and *baptismos*, *immersion*, is furthermore testified by a great number of Pedobaptist critics, of whom may be quoted : Beza, Grotius, Buxtorf, Lightfoot, Scaliger, Rosenmüller, Kuinoel, Jahn, Vatablus, Schleusner, Scapula, Stockius, Olshausen, G. Campbell, McKnight, Spencer, Hammond, Wetstein, Heumann, Altingius, Maldonatus, Lange



## SECTION XVI.

### PASSAGES WHERE BAPTISM IS OCCASIONALLY MENTIONED.

“Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.”—Gal. iii. 26, 27.

#### REMARKS.

From the context, it is plain that the Apostle means to say that the Christians of Galatia were no longer minors under the schoolmaster (see v. 24, and ch. iv. 1–3), but had now by faith on Christ become free sons of full age; and this he proves by the fact that they had in their baptism openly put on Christ. Because Christ is the Son of God, and they had put on Him by faith and baptism; they also must have become what He is—*God’s free sons of full age.*

Here it may be asked, What is it to put on Christ in baptism? We believe that this question cannot be more clearly answered, than by pointing to the analogy of a public and solemn marriage. There may be an inward union of heart between a

man and a woman before the marriage : they may believe on each other, love each other, and consider each other as united in heart ; but they are not considered as fully united until they, through a public marriage, have solemnly declared before God and the world, that they wish to belong to each other for life, and thus, as it were, publicly put on each other. Such, too, is the relation of man to Christ. He may believe on Christ, love Him, and consider himself as united with Him ; but until he has by baptism, before God and the world, publicly and solemnly professed himself willing in life and death to belong to Him, and thus publicly entered into covenant with Him, he cannot be said to have fully, and after God's own appointment, become united with Christ. The true Christian baptism may thus be properly considered as forming a marriage relation between Christ and His people. In it we receive from Christ a direct assurance and pledge of His eternal fellowship with ourselves ; and in return we confess solemnly our faith on Him, our union with Him, our firm purpose entirely to devote ourselves to Him and His cause, and faithfully to follow Him until death. Thus it is that we rightly put on Christ by baptism, and may thenceforth fully adopt this joyful hymn of the Prophet : " I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God ; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments,

and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Isa. lxi. 10. On the contrary, though we by no means wish to deny the salvation of unbaptized believers, yet it is evident, that he who is living in the neglect of baptism is living in the neglect of the duty publicly to put on Christ, in the appointed way, and is thereby depriving himself of the blessing awarded to those who faithfully keep the commandments of God. Ps. xix. 11.

From this passage we find who were baptized in the churches of Galatia: they were only such as could understand, that when they had been "baptized into Christ," they had "put on Christ." The words of the Apostle imply that among all the baptized in all the churches of Galatia, there was not one that could not understand that he had put on Christ by baptism. For he appeals to the personal experience of every one, and says: "Ye are *all* the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as *many of you* as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."\* Here *all* are deemed able to infer that they had put on Christ by baptism, and had thus become one with Him. It is

\* In Rom. vi. 3, the baptized are likewise presupposed to be able to understand that when they had been "baptized into Jesus Christ," they "were baptized into His death." "*Know ye not that so many of us* as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death." How could new-born children know and understand such things? and how could they be ranged among the "*us*" and "*we*" of whom the Apostle speaks in this and the following verses?

evident that, if new-born children had been baptized in the churches of Galatia, Paul could not have used this language. Indeed, who could rightly apply this language to any Pedobaptist church in our time? Were it true that new-born children are born again through baptism, yet one could not address them as such as could understand that they had put on Christ by baptism. It could only, at most, be said of them, that they were invested in Christ by baptism. But this is not what Christ requires from us. He requires our own personal and conscious act; He wishes that we ourselves put Him on by baptism. The question is: Has Christ commanded you personally to be baptized, and yourselves publicly to put Him on by baptism? Why have you not done it? Has your mother, or father, or have some sponsors done it for you? Can that be valid before God as your act? My friend, neglect no longer to obey our Lord's holy requirement of *you—yourself*. Are you a minister of the Gospel? Honor our Lord's command, and He will honor you!

#### TESTIMONIES.

CALVIN: "He uses the similitude of a robe when he says that the Galatians had put on Christ; but he means that they were so grafted into Christ that before God they bore the name and person of Christ, and were more reckoned in Him than in themselves."\*

\* Commentary on Gal. iii. 27.

LOCKE: "God now looking on them, *there appears nothing but Christ*. They are, as it were, covered all over with Him, as a man is with the clothes that he has put on; and hence in the next verse it is said, they are *all* one in Christ Jesus, as if there were but that one person."\*

SCOTT: "Indeed, the connection of the 27th verse with that which precedes, shows that the faith in Christ *which was publicly professed in baptism*, and not the mere outward administration—whether the baptized person had faith or not—was specially intended."†

"One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism."—Eph. iv. 5.

## REMARKS.

The Apostle asserts that there are not two or more Christian Baptisms, but one only. Under the Old Testament there were "divers immersions" of persons, clothes, and utensils, as we have seen;‡ but in the New Dispensation there is but *one* authorized Christian Baptism, viz., the immersion in water of a professed believer into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And deviation from this Baptism, either with respect to the subject, design, or mode, reduces it to a nullity. Now let us ask, Is this *one* Christian Baptism con-

\* Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul, on Gal. iii. 27.

† Commentary, *in loc.*

‡ See page 123.



sistent with Infant Baptism? In the one case baptism is conscientiously sought by the candidate as the appointed symbol of his fellowship with his Saviour—in the other case, the subject neither knows nor cares any thing about it; in the one the subject makes a solemn renunciation of sin and an avowal of faith in Christ—in the other he neither avows nor disavows any thing; in the one the subject is active, “going down into the water”—in the other passive, carried to the font or the bowl; in the one the believer comes “up out of the water,” and “goes on his way rejoicing”—in the other the child is borne away, utterly unconscious of what has been done? Are these different rites one and the same? Can both be practiced under the same law? Are they properly called *one* Faith, *one* Baptism? \* Let it be remembered that all our Pedobaptist friends admit immersion on a credible profession of faith to be Christian Baptism. Can any man, contemplating this point with candor, bring himself to believe that sprinkling or pouring water on an unconscious babe is *one* and the *same* baptism with the former.

“By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free.” 1 Cor. xii. 13.

\* Those who have received the *one* baptism are here considered as having the *one* faith. But what faith have infants?

“Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” xv. 29.

## REMARKS.

In the former of these passages it is said that all Christians have been baptized into one body, that is, to make one body, or one Christian church. Men may belong to whatsoever nation or rank of society, they may be “Jews or Greeks, bond or free;” but when they have been baptized, they are thereby made members of this one body or church, whose head is Christ. Eph. i. 22, 23. As they are internally united by faith, they are also, by baptism, externally united to make that one body. None is here supposed to be baptized upon the expectation, or probability, or possibility that he may yet belong to that body, but all are said to be baptized into the body, and consequently as believing disciples of Christ.

As to 1 Cor. xv. 29, it may be observed, 1, That it has been, and is still interpreted by the Commentators in many different ways. 2. The interpretation of it adopted by some, as if it should refer to an ancient custom to baptize *over* the graves of the dead, is generally rejected among the learned, both because it is inconsistent with the obvious grammatical meaning of the passage, and because we cannot, in the Apostolic age, trace the custom of baptizing *over* the sepulchres of the dead. 3. To

us that interpretation seems most natural according to which the expression "baptized for the dead" is to be regarded as *elliptical*, and meaning "baptized for the resurrection of the dead." This form of expression is not inconsistent with the elliptical language often used by Paul. The Greek preposition "*hyper*" will also bear a translation consistent with this view, and may here properly be rendered "on account of," or "with reference to." The meaning then is: "Else what would they be doing who are baptized *with reference to the dead*—that is the dead corpses, in hope of their resurrection—if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized with reference to the dead?" This interpretation is adopted by the ancient Greek fathers, Chrysostom and Theophylact, who may be supposed to understand their own language. The former says, in explaining the passage: "Paul said, unless there is a resurrection, why art thou baptized for corpses, that is, for mere bodies? For to this end art thou baptized, for the resurrection of thy dead." The latter: "Why are men baptized at all in behalf of the resurrection—that is in expectation of resurrection—if the dead rise not?"\* This view is also adopted by Robinson, in his *Lexicon on the New Testament*. He says: "*Baptized on account of the dead*, that is, Why baptized into a belief of the resurrection of the dead, if in fact the dead rise not." 4. So much is evident that the bap-

\* See "Christian Review." January 1850.

tized persons in this place are supposed by baptism to have *confessed* their faith on the resurrection of the dead. This passage, consequently, does not contain any allusion to the baptism of newborn children, who are not able to *confess* such a faith.

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrines of Christ, let us go on unto perfection ; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” Heb. vi. 1, 2.

## REMARK.

On this passage it may be sufficient only to quote the following remark of De Wette : “ Upon these two things” (viz., repentance and faith) “ follow, in the gospel order of salvation, *baptism*, wherewith *instruction* was connected.”

“Who in old times did not believe, when God once waited and had patience in the time of Noah, when they were preparing the ark, in which few, that is eight souls, were saved through the water ; which now also saves us in baptism, which is signified by the former (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the covenant of a good conscience with God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21. (According to the translation of Luther.)

## REMARKS.

The salvation here ascribed to baptism is represented as corresponding to the salvation of Noah in the ark "through the water." In both cases the act of obedience saved men only as the appointed expression of their saving faith. As the dead in his coffin lies buried in the earth, even so were Noah and his house as *buried* in the ark, which on all sides was surrounded by the waters of the deluge. And as a dead person arises from his sepulchre, so also Noah and his house *emerged* from the water, as if they had arisen out of the grave, and were thus "saved through the water," so that they went happily through and out of it. Likewise a true believer in the "resurrection of Christ" is by his appointment buried in water by immersion, and arises again, as from a grave, out of the water of emersion; and is thus, like Noah, *saved through* the water, so that he comes forth to live a new life to the glory of God.

When Peter says that "*baptism* saves us," he adds, to prevent misunderstanding, that not "the washing away of the filth of the flesh"—or the mere outward act of baptism—but "the covenant of a good conscience with God," is that which saves in baptism; or rather, "the resurrection of Jesus Christ" which faith apprehends and receives, is that which both gives us a good conscience and saves us. Baptism saves in the same way that it washes

away sin (Acts xxii. 16), or as confession saves. Rom. x. 9, 10. (See pp. 87, 88.)

All who are baptized are here said to enter into a "covenant of a good conscience with God." But as the conscience of new-born children has nothing to do with their baptism, they have neither a good nor evil conscience, as they neither have done any good nor evil, Rom. ix. 11; so, consequently, this passage has no reference to the baptism of new-born children.



## SECTION XVII.

### PASSAGES ERRONEOUSLY INTERPRETED IN FAVOR OF INFANT BAPTISM.

#### *A.—Christ blessing the children.*

“And they brought young children to Jesus, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.” Mark x. 13–16.

#### REMARKS.

In this passage, compared with Matt. xix. 13–15, and Luke xviii. 15–17, Pedobaptists find one of their strongest arguments in support of infant baptism. “When,” say they, “we see the piety of the Jews who brought little children to Christ, that he might bless them; when we hear him rebuking his disciples for forbidding the children to come to him; when we hear his command, ‘Suffer little



children to come to me;' when we consider the reason he gives: 'For of such is the kingdom of God;' and when we read that 'He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them'—who would forbid the little ones to come to Christ *in baptism*, which is the ordinary means whereby man is made a partaker of Christ, is born again, and becomes a child of God?"

On this we answer: If, to the relation of the gracious condescension of our Saviour to take the children up in his arms, it had been added, "And He baptized them," instead of the words, "and blessed them," then this passage might with propriety be adduced in defense of infant baptism. But as the words now read, this passage contains no more evidence for infant baptism than for infant communion, or infant circumcision.

It is certain that the children here mentioned were not baptized. For we are clearly informed that "Jesus himself baptized not," John iv. 2; neither does he command to bring the children to the Apostles that they might baptize them, but to himself, that he might put his hands on them and bless them.\* 'That Jesus before this had not com-

\* On this, Rev. I. S. C. F. Frey, a converted Jew, and in his latter years a Baptist, writes: "This was done, not in obedience to a religious institution, but in conformity with the usual custom of the Jews; for, in imitation of Joseph having brought his two sons to Jacob to bless them (Gen. xlviii.), so, whenever a person of renown for learning, piety, &c., arrives in a place even

manded to baptize children, is also evident; for the disciples had baptized many. John iii. 22, 26; iv. 1. Now, if they had been accustomed to see children brought to Jesus, and ever, themselves, had been commanded to baptize them, they certainly would never have rebuked and turned away those who brought them. This, consequently, is a clear evidence that neither our Saviour nor his Apostles on this occasion had any idea of infant baptism, and hence it is as evident that he never intended to have it introduced into his church. For here we see children brought to Jesus that he might bless them, or at least "*pray*" over them. Matt. xix. 13. Now let us ask: If baptism would have brought these children into the covenant of grace, or into Christ's church, or secured to them any spiritual benefit, would our Saviour have concealed that fact from those that brought the children, or from his disciples? Would he "take them in his arms and bless them," and give them back without baptism and without a word upon that ordinance? Was it ever known that any spiritual benefit was sought from him, and he bestowed it not? Here the spiritual good of these children was sought at his hands, and if baptism was the seal, the key, and the door to all the spiritual blessings of the covenant of

at the present day, parents and guardians bring their children to him to receive a blessing from his hand. This argument, therefore, has long been abandoned by the most learned and pious of our opponents."

grace—as Pedobaptists often say—would our Saviour refuse it, or send them away without it, especially as he was now going about in order to “make disciples and baptize?” John iv. 1. This is impossible; and therefore we also infer that infant baptism is no part of the will of Christ, but adverse to it—that it can communicate no good, and ought not to be observed.

Nothing, therefore, can be more perverse than to appeal to these children, to whom the Lord would not administer baptism, as an evidence in favor of infant baptism. To baptize such as Jesus would not baptize, and then refer to his example in justification of our conduct, is nothing else but a trifling with his holy institutions, and is directly opposed to his will as expressed both by word and deed.

In vain is the objection, that our Saviour omitted to baptize these children, because they were already circumcised, and because Christian baptism was not as yet instituted. For as to the former, all Jewish *men* who were converted to Christianity, on the same principle, ought not to be baptized. And as to the latter, we have already proved, that the baptism administered in the name of Christ before the day of Pentecost was identical with that administered thenceforth. But even could it be proved that the baptism now administered by the disciples of Christ, could not be valid as a Christian baptism, yet by that means nothing would be gained. For how could infants have any more right to Christian

baptism than to the baptism of John? Was it because Christian baptism requires neither repentance nor faith, as the former did? Or are infants in Scripture mentioned as subjects of the one more than of the other?

As to the words of our Saviour, "Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," they have been explained in many different ways. One party of Pedobaptists have so interpreted the words, as if our Saviour meant to say, "Suffer little children to come to me *in baptism*; for to *such as are brought to me in baptism* belongs the kingdom of heaven." But this interpretation is at once to be rejected as an arbitrary and open perversion of the words of the Lord. Here is nothing either expressed or implied with respect to the baptism or the circumcision of the infants brought to Jesus; nor does what our Lord says apply to those children more than any other children. It is not "Suffer these little *baptized* or *circumcised* children to come to me," nor, "Suffer children of Christian parents to come to me in baptism;" but suffer little children—that is, any little children—to come to me. Thus the saving arms of Jesus are outstretched to *all* little children, either circumcised or uncircumcised, either baptized or unbaptized, born of Christian parents or heathen.

To the objection often made, that little children now, while Christ is not visibly on earth, cannot be brought to him but through baptism, we answer in

the words of Luther : “ *With our prayer* are brought to Christ and come to him those little children whom we cannot\* baptize : . . . and Christ also receives them, according to His promise, *All that ye ask shall be Yea*. Likewise, *Suffer little children to come to me*. . . . Christ receives them, though they cannot† come to the water baptism of Christ ; for He baptizes them with His Holy Spirit, just as He baptized those children without water baptism whom he received, pressed to His heart, blessed and said : *To such belongs the kingdom of heaven*. . . It is not always necessary to bring men to Christ on the arms and shoulders, as the children there were brought, whereof the Evangelists write. No, we can also, in case of necessity, bring men, *great or small*, to Christ *with our prayer*.”‡

Others have interpreted the words, “ Of such is the kingdom of God,” as if they meant, “ To such teachable and humble souls as the little children, belongs the kingdom of God ;” when, at the same time, they have maintained that little children themselves, as unregenerate and defiled by original sin, are excluded from the kingdom of God ; and further, that regenerated souls, that in some respects resemble them, belong to the kingdom of God. As to ourselves, we cannot agree with this interpretation, because it is implied in the act of Jesus, that He must needs have declared himself with regard

\* Or “ ought not.”

† Or “ ought not.”

‡ Luther's Works, edited by Welch, tome 21, p. 204.

to the children themselves, as well as respecting such as in some points resemble them.

Again, others understand the words of Christ so, that He thereby acknowledges, not only adults resembling infants, but infants themselves as partakers of the kingdom of God. This interpretation seems to us most agreeable to the context. We are also in nowise disturbed by such an interpretation, as if it could afford a support for infant baptism. For if Pedobaptists would thus argue, "To little children belongs the kingdom of God ; therefore they are entitled to all the privileges of the kingdom, that is, of the visible church of Christ, consequently even to baptism," they evidently would prove too much, and thereby refute themselves. For, in the first place, our text does not distinguish the infants of believers from those of infidels. If we, therefore, were entitled, on this principle, to baptize the infants of believers, we also were just as well entitled to baptize the infants of Jews, Turks, and heathen. But now, all denominations, excepting the Catholics, reject the baptism of such children. Again, on the same principle, Pedobaptists ought also to give the Lord's Supper to new-born baptized children, as baptism and the Lord's Supper are most closely and inseparably connected. But now this custom also is rejected by all Protestant denominations, yea, even by the Romanists themselves. But let us ask the Pedobaptists, By what authority do you exclude infants from the Lord's Supper,



while the kingdom of God and all its privileges belong to them, and they besides are *baptized*, and—as many of you contend—regenerated in baptism? Does not the spiritual life that, according to your doctrine, is born in baptism, also need to be nourished by the Lord's Supper? If it be objected that a discernment of the Lord's body and self-examination are required to precede the participation of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 28, 29), we answer: It is just as necessary that the belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a hearty dependence on His grace, the covenant of a good conscience with God, and a confession of faith in His name (Rom. vi. 3, 4; 1 Pet. iii. 21; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts viii. 37), should in all cases precede Christian baptism.

By the “kingdom of God” in this place, is not meant the visible church of Christ,\* but His real

\* “This interpretation of the phrase ‘kingdom of heaven’ is not sustained. The Patriarchs were not in the visible kingdom of heaven when those words (Matt. viii. 11) were spoken, consequently none from the east, west, north, or south, could sit down with them. Our Saviour represents persons of certain characters, as endeavoring to enter the gateway of heaven, who, when they get within the entrance, are found to be destitute of the wedding garment, and are therefore cast out. Such were the Pharisees, who were persuaded by their Rabbis, that they were sufficiently righteous to enter the visible and invisible kingdom, inasmuch as they were the *seed*, and had the *sign*. But while such were rejected, the blessed Redeemer says, that children are of the kingdom of heaven. . . . This unspeakable blessing is not obtained by birth, baptism, circumcision, nor any



invisible kingdom, which will not truly appear until Christ's second coming. 2 Tim. iv. 1. For it is that kingdom which none can "enter" but such as receive it as a little child (Mark x. 15), and are really converted and born again. Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 3. Into that kingdom those infants who die in their infancy may be received, and they have no need whatever of baptism, in order to be partakers of it. Baptism belongs to the visible church of Christ on earth, which many false professors, indeed, can enter, as such cannot always be distinguished from the true ones. See Matt. xiii. 47, 48; xxv. 2; Acts viii. 13. In order to be a member of that church it is required that one shall profess his faith in Christ and be baptized. And as infants cannot make such a profession, they neither can be visible members of that church, nor have any right to baptism.

In vain is it objected, that if children are qualified to belong to the kingdom of glory, they are much more qualified to belong to the visible church of Christ on earth. For when God receives any one to His kingdom of glory, He acts as an almighty and independent Sovereign; and it cannot be denied that many are now in the kingdom of glory who, while on earth, could not be received into a visible church of God through an outward ceremonial act.

other work of man, but by the election of grace, through the blood of Christ."—"Reply to Pressly, by Samuel Williams (a Baptist)." Cincinnati, 1853; p. 33.

But He has not left it to our own choice to receive every one as a member of the visible church of Christ, but has described, definitely, the conditions upon which we are bound to admit to the fellowship of that church. If Pedobaptists wish to blame us because we will not, as they say, incorporate with the visible church of Christ such as are admitted to that which is far greater—the kingdom of glory, it may be observed that the Pedobaptists themselves are just as blamable in denying a place at the Lord's table to those who, notwithstanding, are considered qualified to receive a place in the kingdom of glory.

Equally vain is the following objection: "When Christ declares that the kingdom of God belongs to children, they can also be considered as disciples of Christ, and are, consequently, entitled to baptism." For this assertion itself, places infants out of the Commission. The Apostles were commanded to *make* disciples; but according to the assertion, infants were *already* disciples; they were not the materials, therefore, out of which they were to make disciples, and, consequently, they were not included in the Commission.

That new-born children cannot, as such, be made disciples, nor are able to believe the Gospel, is already proved (pp. 33, 69.) And could it even be proved, that new-born children generally, and those of believers especially, are sanctified from their birth by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit,

even that would have nothing to do with baptism. For to be sanctified by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit, and to be made a disciple of Christ by the preaching and belief of the Gospel, are two different things. But now it can in nowise be proved, that infants generally, or those of believers especially, are as to their nature sanctified from their birth. On the contrary, we learn from the Scriptures, that they are “by nature the children of wrath” (Eph. ii. 3), corrupted by original sin (Ps. li. 7), born “flesh of flesh” (John iii. 6), that they are “transgressors from the womb” (Isa. xlviii. 8), “estranged from the womb and go astray as soon as they are born” (Ps. lviii. 3), &c. And the truth of this is proved by daily experience. For the very first things that are observed, both in baptized and unbaptized children, are manifestations of sinful dispositions, selfishness, impatience, peevishness, &c. Yet children who die in their infancy are saved by the atonement of Christ. They have fallen in Adam, but in the fall sunk into the outstretched arms of Christ. This truth our Saviour testifies by taking them up in His arms, putting His hands upon them and blessing them—an act in the highest degree touching and instructive; an act that speaks more powerfully than all words, in comfort to bereaved parents; but—mark!—at the same time an act, whereby our Saviour tacitly declares that He is willing to bless little children without

baptism, and that infant baptism is no part of the Gospel dispensation.

But in what manner God saves those who die in their infancy, the Scriptures have not revealed, as such knowledge is not necessary for us. Nothing in the word of God is addressed to new-born children, nor are the ministers of the Gospel commissioned with a message to them. The preaching of the Gospel is for those who are able to hear, understand and believe it; and not for unconscious children. Faith in Christ which comes by hearing, secures the salvation of believers, not because there is any saving efficacy in faith itself, but because, by divine appointment, it is the means through which they apprehend the atonement of Christ. Unconscious children are saved by the all-wise counsel of God in some other way, unknown to us. If they cannot repent, or believe, or partake of the ordinances of the church of Christ, God neither requires it from them, nor do they lose any thing from the want of it.

#### TESTIMONY.

DR. OLSHAUSEN: "*Of the allusion to infant baptism often sought in this narrative, there is evidently no trace.* The Redeemer sets forth the children to the Apostles as symbols of the spiritual new birth, and a simple, child-like disposition. But on the part of the parents who brought the children, there is evidently nothing else intended than a spiritual blessing for them, and this the infants received

when Jesus put His hands upon them, which, in connection with the prayer offered by Jesus, could not be without a beneficial, spiritual influence.”\*

*B.—Regeneration of Water and Spirit.*

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”—John iii. 5.

REMARKS.

While the preceding passage on the one hand has been considered as one of the strongest props for the baptism of infants, because our Saviour so graciously acknowledged them, this, on the other hand, is appealed to as the chief argument for the necessity of infant baptism, because it is supposed that, according to it, infants could not be saved without baptism. But the two arguments, when compared, involve a self-contradiction. According to the one passage, it is said, infants are to be baptized, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them, and they are partakers of Christ and of His treasures of salvation already, previous to baptism; but, according to this they are to be baptized, because they could not be saved without baptism. Let us see whether this latter basis for infant baptism is able to support it better than the former.

In the first place, we ought not to lose sight of

\* Biblical Commentary, on Matt. xix. 13, 14.

the fact, that baptism in this passage is not so much as mentioned. Here mention is made only of a birth "of water and Spirit." But the phrase, "born of water and Spirit," has been, and still is, an object of much controversy among the most distinguished divines of the Pedobaptists themselves. Some contend that the word "water" here signifies the water of baptism; others, that it signifies the cleansing efficacy of the Holy Spirit in regeneration; others again explain the passage in other ways. The limits of this treatise do not allow us to examine these different expositions. We would only remark, that before this passage can be urged as evidence that baptism is necessary for the salvation of infants, it must be clearly proved that the expression "born of water and Spirit," signifies born again in and by baptism.

Suppose, however, that the expression "born of water and Spirit," signifies "born again in and by baptism," what would be the consequence? Is the meaning of our passage this: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, every man, without any exception, who is not baptized, and by baptism born again, cannot be saved?" Such a sense would be directly opposed to other plain passages of Scripture, and to the whole spirit of the doctrine of Christ. It would in that case no more be a truth, that man is saved through faith alone, but that an outward performance also is indispensably necessary for salvation. Thus the thief on the cross could not be saved; for



he was evidently not baptized. Nor would it be true that Cornelius and his friends were already saved before baptism, although it is said that "the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them, and that they spoke with tongues and magnified God," EVEN BEFORE THEY WERE BAPTIZED. Acts x. 44-48. Likewise, the great number of martyrs in the ancient church who sealed their faith on Christ with their own life and blood, but had no opportunity to receive baptism, could not be saved. Thus it is evident that the Lord Jesus could not here have purposed to teach, that baptism is indispensably necessary to salvation.

If the word "water" have reference to baptism, the utterance of our Saviour must of course be understood with a necessary limitation. This the text also very well allows. For there it does not read "every one," but only "a man." "Except *a man* be born," &c. Here "a man" corresponds to the Greek "*tis*," which has several significations, as *any*, *many*, *one*, *I*, *thou*, etc.\* Therefore the meaning of our passage is, according to the original, either "Except *any*," [I do not tell who,] or "except *men generally*," [I do not say all without exception,] or even, "except *thou* [Nicodemus] be born again of water and Spirit," &c. Thus we find that the Holy Spirit on purpose has used a word which does not signify "*every one*"—(as in the 16th verse

\* See Matthiæ Gramm. 2 theil, p. 1078, and Bernhardt's Wissenschaftl Syntax der Griech Sprache, p. 429.



of this chapter)—but a word that has a more circumscribed and vague signification. One cannot, consequently, with any appearance of a sound interpretation, from our passage force the meaning that would denounce the sentence of eternal death on all unbaptized children. If, therefore, the word *water* signifies *the water of baptism*, it must only proclaim the general rule, by which such as could hear and understand the glad tidings of salvation through Christ, could be saved. The Lord did not mean to say that new-born children who are incapable of receiving the Gospel, and are an exception to the ordinary rule, cannot be saved without baptism. He was explaining to Nicodemus what, according to the Scripture rule, was essential for salvation. He first tells him (v. 3), that regeneration is necessary, and then (if “water” really signifies the water of baptism), He adds to this, baptism, as a public avowal of faith in Him. But the peculiar circumstances of new-born children were clearly not under consideration.

If the word “water” has reference to baptism, we further have to ascertain the true import of the expression “born of water and Spirit.” Then *baptism* and *regeneration* must here be connected in language in the same way that *faith* and *baptism* is, in Mark xvi. 16. In neither of these places is it taught, that baptism is essentially necessary for salvation, but at most, only that it is something that is ordinarily to accompany faith and the new birth.

Baptism alone, without faith, does not regenerate or save any. The subject of baptism, therefore, must have faith before baptism; and whosoever hath faith, he is also regenerated—not by baptism, but by the Word and Spirit of God. See James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; John i. 12, 13; Gal. iii. 26; 1 John v. 1. But as regeneration takes place when a man receives faith, and baptism is the expression of faith which necessarily follows; a person who is unwilling to express or profess his faith, gives no evidence of faith or of regeneration; whence baptism, as the outward sign of faith and regeneration, may thus be rightly connected in language with regeneration. The work of the Spirit through the word makes a man a new creature, and baptism is the manifestation of the change. The confession of faith, and the public putting on of Christ by baptism, must be added to exhibit man as a new creature. When a man who has received spiritual life, manifests it by putting on Christ in baptism, then he is born of water and Spirit—his new birth is apparent. If, therefore, one would ask, “If faith alone saves man, why then is baptism so necessary, that the Lord Jesus could say, ‘Except a man be born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God?’” The answer would be: Baptism is the public profession of faith, and when one willfully refuses to make such a confession, there is no evidence either of faith or salvation. See Matt. x. 32, 33; Rom. x. 8–10; Rev. xxi. 8. And as the con-

fession of Christ is in some sense necessary to salvation, so in like manner baptism might be said to be a necessary mode of confessing Christ.

The supposition that new-born children must be born again by infant baptism in order to be saved, is in fact too absurd to be maintained by any evangelical Christian. It betrays that self-righteousness which is so deeply rooted in human nature. For it maintains that it is so necessary for man to *do* something for obtaining the grace of God, that even the new-born child, which is not able for itself to perform the supposed conditions of salvation, must perform them through others. This is to make a false Saviour of Baptism, and implies a criminal unbelief in the all-sufficiency of Christ. It is in fact not a less gross error than the doctrine of the soul masses for the dead, of indulgences, of worshiping departed saints, etc., as maintained by the Roman Catholics. This supposition, however, has now been rejected by the most of Protestant Pedobaptists as an error betraying palpable ignorance and papal darkness.

#### TESTIMONY.

LUTHER: "As to the children of the Jews which died before the eighth day, it is easy to answer, as well as concerning our little children dying before baptism. For they do not sin against the covenant of circumcision or baptism. For inasmuch as the law commands that they should be circumcised on

the eighth day, why then would God condemn them that died before the eighth day? Therefore their souls are to be committed to the will of the heavenly Father, who, we know, is merciful. And hereto is also to be referred what Paul says in Rom. v. 14, of those who have not sinned *after the similitude of Adam's transgression*. And of Jacob and Esau he says in the same Epistle, ch. ix. 11, *Neither having done any good or evil*. For though the infants carry with them innate sin, which we call original sin; yet it is something great that they still have sinned nothing against the law. As then God by His nature is merciful, He will not for this cause suffer them to be in any worse condition, because they neither could obtain circumcision in the Old Testament, nor baptism in the New."\*

*C.—The Children of Christians Holy.*

"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."—1 Cor. vii. 14.

REMARK.

Many persons consider this passage as one of the strongest arguments in favor of infant baptism, because children here are said to be "holy" by their connection with Christian parents. But this passage is so far from containing any argument in

\* Lutheri Opp. Exeg. Lat. Erlangæ, tom. iv. p. 73.

favor of infant baptism that, on the contrary, it affords a conclusive evidence against it. We prefer to insert the able exposition of this passage of Rev. J. L. Dagg, D.D., who writes thus :

“The Jews considered all Gentiles to be unclean, and thought it unlawful for a Jew to be in the house, keep company, or eat with, or touch a Gentile. By some means, possibly from the influence of Judaizing teachers, the church at Corinth seems to have been agitated with the question, whether the same rule ought not to be established to regulate the intercourse of the members of the church with other persons; that is, whether the church ought not to decide, that all who were without were unclean to them who were within, just as Gentiles were unclean to Jews; and that, therefore, it was inconsistent with Christian purity to dwell, keep company, eat with, or touch them. While this question was undergoing discussion in the church, it was perceived that it involved a very important case. Some of their members were married to unbelievers, and if such a rule should be established, these members would be compelled to separate from their unbelieving husbands or wives. Although the lawfulness of the marriage was not questioned, yet it would be unlawful for a believing husband to dwell with his wife, until God had converted her. The church resolved—probably after much discussion of the question—to write to the Apostle respecting it. This letter he had received, as appears from the

first verse of this chapter. On the general question of intercourse with unbelievers he treats in the fifth chapter, and decides that to keep company or eat with persons who make no pretension to religion is not unlawful, and that were all such persons to be esteemed unclean, and their touch polluting, Christians must needs go out of the world. On the particular case of those members of the church who were married to unbelievers, the Apostle treats in the chapter before us. He decides, in verses 12 and 13, that they may lawfully dwell together; and in verse 14, for the conviction and silencing of any members of the church who might object to this decision, he in substance says: 'The unbelieving husband is not unclean, so that his wife may not lawfully dwell with him; the unbelieving wife is not unclean, so that her husband may not lawfully dwell with her. If they are unclean, then your children are unclean, and not one parent in the whole church must dwell with or touch his children until God shall convert them; and thus Christians will be made to sever the ties that bind parents to their children, and throw out the offspring of Christian parents into the ungodly world from their very birth, without any provision for their protection, support, or religious education.'

"It will be perceived in the preceding interpretation, that the phrase *your children* is taken in a different sense from that which it obtains in any of the interpretations usually offered. It is here sup-



posed to refer to the *whole church*. Had the Apostle designed to speak of those children only who have one parent a believer and the other an unbeliever, he would have said (*tekna autōn*) *their children*, instead of (*tekna humōn*) *your children*. In addressing the church, and in giving general precepts, he uses the pronouns *ye* and *you* (see preceding chapter throughout, and verses 1 and 5 of this chapter). But in verse 8, where he gives directions applicable to particular cases, although he introduces the phrase, 'I say *to* the unmarried and widows,' he makes reference to these persons, not by the pronoun *you*, but *them*: 'It is good for *them* to abide even as I.' The same mode of speaking he continues to use as far down as to the verse in question: 'Let *them* marry, let *him* not put her away; let *her* not leave him.' After the same manner he would have said, 'Else were *their* children unclean,' had he intended only the children of such cases of mixed marriage as are referred to in the preceding part of the verse. What further confirms this opinion is, that in the original text the substantive verb is in the present tense—'your children *are* unclean'—a mode of speaking more suited for the stating of a parallel than a dependent case.

"The general principles of the preceding interpretation fall in precisely with the course of the Apostle's argument commenced in the 5th chapter. When these principles have been established, it is not of vital importance to the sense of the passage



to determine the translation of the preposition *en*. Many have translated it *to*, as it is in the very next verse. This sense accords well with our interpretation. 'The unbelieving husband is sanctified *to* the wife,' just as it is said in Titus i. 15, 'Unto the pure all things are pure.' But perhaps the more literal rendering *in* will give the Apostle's sense more accurately. While both parents lived in unbelief they were unclean to themselves and to each other. 'Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled.' Titus i. 15. According to the Jewish rules respecting ceremonial cleanness, the conversion of one party would not render the other party holy. But in Gospel ceremonies it is different. By the abrogation of the Jewish ceremonial law, and by the conversion of the wife, the *unbelieving husband* (*hegiastai*) *has become holy*, not in himself, but (*en te gynaiki*) *in the wife*. That the Jews considered Gentiles unclean, as stated above, may be proved from various passages of Scripture: see Acts x. 28; xi. 3; John xviii. 28; Gal. ii. 12. Dr. Adam Clarke says, in his note on John xviii. 28, 'The Jews considered even the *touch* of a Gentile as a legal defilement.'

"From the text, thus interpreted, the following inference may be drawn: *Infant baptism was unknown in the churches planted by the Apostles.*

"Paul expressly affirms that the children *are unclean*, with the exception of the holiness which they

possess in common with unbelieving adults. This holiness entitles *unbelieving adults* to familiar intercourse, but not to church-membership or Christian ordinances; and it can do no more for the children. Hence, the children are so far holy, as to be fit for familiar intercourse; but beyond this they are unclean, and therefore unfit for church-membership or baptism. This is true, let it be remembered, not only of those children who were the offspring of mixed marriages, but of all the children of Christian parents at Corinth.

“The point may be exhibited in another light. The church at Corinth was a Pedobaptist church, or it was not. If it was a Pedobaptist church, the argument of Paul was invalid, because it was based on the false assumption, that the children sealed with the seal of God’s covenant, dedicated to Him in the holy rite of baptism, and admitted within the pale of the church, were in like circumstances with unbelieving and unbaptized adults, who were out of the covenant, and out of the church. But Paul did not use an invalid argument, therefore this church was not Pedobaptist; and the same must be true of all the churches planted by the Apostles, since they were, doubtless, all similarly organized.

“The phrase ‘*your children*’ included the offspring, not only of the gentile members of the church, but also of the Judaizers who had produced disquietude by their attachment to ceremonial distinctions and usages. These men gloried in the covenant of circumcision; and contemplated their off-

spring with pleasure, as the children of the covenant, circumcised on the eighth day, or entitled to receive the seal of the covenant in any form which might be divinely authorized. If the Christian church was established on the covenant of circumcision, no children on earth had a better right to its privileges, than these lineal descendants of Abraham, who were, at the same time, the immediate offspring of Christian parents. Yet to these parents the Apostle declares the unwelcome truth, that, with reference to the Christian church, their children, and the uncircumcised and unbelieving gentile, were on the same level. Nothing could demonstrate more conclusively that the Christian church was not established on the covenant of circumcision. The text, therefore, is the authoritative decision of Paul against the doctrine which infant baptism claims for its foundation.

“Our inference has been sustained. It has been proved that infant baptism was unknown in the churches planted by the Apostles;\* and further,

\* With the author of this treatise the first doubts about the divine origin of infant baptism were aroused in contemplating this text. He had previously been of the opinion that, though there could not be found any distinct example in the New Testament as an evidence in favor of infant baptism, yet it might be that it had an apostolic origin, as no distinct example could be found against such a supposition. But from this passage he saw, that if infant baptism had been introduced by the Apostle into the Corinthian church, he could not, under any circumstances, have questioned whether the children might not have been “unclean,” because baptism would have made them “holy.”

that its fundamental doctrine is not apostolical. In such a controversy, to prove the negative by direct argument, could scarcely have been expected; yet this has been accomplished, by means of a text on which Pedobaptists have relied with much confidence."\*

#### TESTIMONIES.

DRESSLER: "The idea of a Christian nobility is foreign to the Bible. By birth, man is only man. According to Paul, a holy pedigree is nothing in religion. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but keeping the commands of God. The passage 1 Cor. vii. 14, does not support any such views. Paul had said that if one would avoid all contact with pagans, he must leave the world. He now says, if the Corinthians would flee from every unbeliever, regarding him as unclean, they must flee from their own children, and hold them as unclean; for they were among the unbelievers—'otherwise your children would be unclean'—for they are not Christians by birth merely. 'But now are they holy,' *i. e.*, you are not to consider yourselves as polluted by them."†

DR. H. A. W. MEYER: "Sanctified is she *in the brother*‡ (who is her companion), so that in him

\* "History of Baptism," by I. T. Hinton, Philadelphia, pp. 144-146; and "A Decisive Argument against Infant Baptism," by J. L. Dagg, Charleston, pp. 49-52.

† "Doctrine of the Sacrament of Baptism," p. 127.

‡ According to another reading in the original, instead of "the husband."

her holiness *consists*, or has *its mediate cause*. *Else are, &c.*: because—if this sanctification (*hegiastai*) does not take place—*your children are unclean*, that is, profane. That the children of Christians are *not* profane, but *holy*, is *the thing conceded*; by which Paul proves that the unchristian companion is sanctified through his Christian mate; for just as with the children, nothing but the special connection with Christians (their parents), is the sanctifying means, so also must the same connection in the mixed marriage have an influence. *Had infant baptism at that time already existed*, Paul could not have drawn such a conclusion, because *the holiness* of the children of Christians *would then have had another ground*.”\*

DR. DE WETTE: “*Epei estin*—for else your children are unclean, but now they are *holy*, viz., through connection with you. *The latter* the Apostle cannot announce as an *uncontested supposition* of the children of *mixed marriages*, as it was yet a matter of doubt (which he here wishes to remove), whether in a mixed marriage a holy connection could exist, and he, consequently, would have been seeking to prove the contested thing by something that *was contested*.”†

DR. OLSHAUSEN: “It is evident that Paul would not have chosen this way of arguing, if infant baptism already at that time had been in use.”‡

\* Commentary on 1 Cor. vii. 14.

† Commentary on the passage.

‡ Biblical Commentary on the passage.

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*D.—The Washing of Regeneration.*

“But when the kindness and love toward man of our Saviour, God, appeared, not by the works in righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the bath of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Tit. iii. 4–7.—(Verbally after the original.)

## REMARKS.

This passage, as well as John iii. 5, has been explained by the learned in different ways. They have especially disagreed in interpreting the word “bath,” or “washing,” one part having seen in it the bath of baptism; others, again, having understood it to be a figurative expression, signifying the cleansing efficacy of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. As the Apostle does not here make any express mention of baptism, the word “bath” may justly be taken in a figurative sense. This, too, is favored by the 6th verse, where God is said to have poured out the Holy Spirit richly. In regeneration, or the renewing of the Holy Spirit, man is, as it were, immersed in the richly-effused, cleansing, quickening, and saving power of the Holy Spirit: and in this respect regeneration may, indeed, here be said, in a figurative sense, to involve a bathing of the soul.

If we, however, take for granted that the word "bath" here refers to baptism, then again the question arises : In what relation is baptism here placed to regeneration ? We have already, in the exposition of John iii. 5, shown that baptism is not the efficient cause but merely the accompaniment of regeneration, which great change is effected by the Holy Spirit only through the word. If, therefore, the expression, "the bath of regeneration," signifies the bath of baptism, this expression must be interpreted in the same way as the expression "born of water and Spirit." The Holy Spirit works "the renewing," and baptism is its sign. The Spirit imparts a new life ; baptism manifests it. In this sense baptism may be called a "bath of regeneration."

It is evident that this passage has no reference to new-born children, but only to adult persons : to these alone the Apostle is writing ; of these alone does he speak. New-born children cannot be born again through faith in the Gospel and the word of truth, and much less through baptism alone. Further it is to be observed, that all those who are included in this passage are represented as saved, regenerated, richly filled with the Holy Spirit, justified, and heirs according to the hope of eternal life : expressions which by no means will apply to new-born children, of whose regeneration, justification by faith, hope, etc., the Scriptures nowhere speak.



## SECTION XVIII.

### PASSAGES WHOSE REFERENCE TO BAPTISM IS DOUBTFUL.

“THAT He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”—Eph. v. 26.

If the expression, “the washing of water,” here signifies baptism—which is a subject of dispute among the learned—this passage also is to be interpreted in accordance with the preceding. As in 1 Pet. iii. 21, the water of baptism is not saving, but the “covenant of a good conscience with God,” so here neither is the “washing of water” that which cleanses the soul, but the Word. “That He might cleanse it *by the word*.” In accordance herewith we also read in John xv. 3, “Now ye are clean *through the word* which I have spoken unto you;” and Acts xv. 9, “God purified their hearts *by faith*.” “The washing of water” is, consequently, here only the emblem of that which is effected by the word and faith. Believers are cleansed “in baptism” emblematically: the reality that corresponds to the emblem they have experienced in believing the

word. Now new-born children cannot be cleansed by believing the word ; wherefore, if "the washing of water" signifies baptism, new-born children have nothing to do with that washing, which is appointed for such only as have by faith received the word to their spiritual cleansing.

"Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."—1 Cor. vi. 11.

If the expression "washed" here has reference to baptism, this passage also has nothing to do with infant baptism. For new-born children cannot be said to be washed, sanctified and justified by the name of the Lord Jesus—a phraseology that clearly presupposes faith in the Gospel of Christ.

"Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."—Heb. x. 22.

Even this passage has been differently interpreted by the learned ; some having referred it to baptism, others, on the contrary, having here seen only a figurative mode of speaking. To us the latter interpretation seems to be the right one. The phrase, "Our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," is evidently figurative, having reference to

the purifications by the sprinkling of blood of the Old Testament. See Ex. xxix. 11; Lev. viii. 30. It seems, therefore, most natural also to understand figuratively the words, "Our bodies washed," etc. The phraseology refers to the washing of the priests in the Old Testament. See Ex. xxix. 4; xxx. 18-21. The pure, or purifying water is, consequently, a spiritual water. Ex. xxxvi. 25, 26.



## SECTION XIX.

### SUMMARY OF TESTIMONIES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE CONCERNING BAPTISM.

WE have now examined all the passages of the New Testament that either expressly mention baptism, or have been considered as containing any allusion to it, and we ask our readers this question: Has sprinkling or pouring water upon new-born children in any place been commanded, mentioned, or in any way alluded to? We doubt not that every one who has, with us, attentively and impartially considered the doctrine of Christ and His Apostles on this subject, will feel constrained to assent to the following testimonies of distinguished divines among the Pedobaptists themselves:

PROFESSOR LANGE: "All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament fail. It is totally opposed to the spirit of the apostolic age, and the fundamental principles of the New Testament."\*

STARCK: "There is not a single example to be found in the New Testament where infants were

\* On Infant Baptism, p. 101.

baptized. In household baptisms there was always reference to the Gospel, as having been received. The New Testament presents just as good grounds for infant communion.”\*

MORUS: “But we do not do it” [baptize infants] “according to any express command, as no such is to be found in the writings of the New Testament, nor according to any distinct example there occurring, nor *as in consequence of a conclusion from any passage of Scripture.*”†

BRETSCHNEIDER: “Rheinard, Morus, and Döderlein, say—Infant baptism is not to be found in the Bible.”‡

SCHLEIERMACHER: “All traces of infant baptism which one will find in the New Testament, *must first be put into it.*”§

NEANDER: “It is certain that Christ did not ordain infant baptism.” . . . “We *cannot prove* that the Apostles ordained infant baptism.”||

DR. HAGENBACH: “The passages from Scripture which are thought to intimate that infant baptism had come into use in the primitive church, are doubtful and prove nothing.”¶

KLEIN: “New-born infants are incapable of

\* History of Baptism, p. 11.

† “Christian Theology,” Lincöping (Sweden), 1799, p. 329.

‡ Theology, vol. 2, p. 758.

§ Christian Theology, p. 383.

|| History of Christian Religion, vol. 1, p. 360.

¶ “History of the Doctrines,” Edinburgh, 1846, vol. 1, p. 193.

faith, and the New Testament mentions the baptism of adults only.”\*

LIMBORCH : “ No instance can be produced from which it may be indisputably inferred that any child was baptized by the Apostles.”†

DR. GOODWIN : “ Read all the Acts of the Apostles, still it is said—They *believed* and were baptized.”‡

BISHOP BURNET : “ There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament, for the baptism of infants.”§

DR. WOODS : “ It is a plain case that there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings. There is no mention made in the New Testament of any definite instructions of Christ to the Apostles, or of the Apostles to Christians, in regard to the baptism of little children.”||

PROFESSOR STUART : “ Commands, or plain and certain examples in the New Testament relative to it” [infant baptism], “ I do not find.”¶

WINER : “ In the apostolic age, baptism was by *immersion*, as its symbolical explanation shows.”\*\*

NEANDER : “ Baptism was originally administered

\* In Huiterus Redivivus, p. 344.

† Comp. Sys. Div. Lib. 5, c. 22.

‡ Works, vol. 1, part 1, p. 200.

§ “ Expos. of the 39 Articles,” art. 27.

|| “ Lectures on Infant Baptism,” pp. 17, 40.

¶ “ Biblical Repository,” 1833, p. 385.

\*\* “ Manuscript Lect. on Christ. Antiquities.”

by *immersion*, and many of the comparisons of St. Paul allude to this form of its administration.”\*

BRETSCHNEIDER: “The apostolic church baptized *only by immersion*.”†

GUERIKE: “Baptism was originally administered by *immersion*.”‡

HAHN: “According to the apostolic instruction and example, baptism was performed by *immersing the whole man*.”§

\* Church History, vol. 1, p. 361.

† Theology, vol. 1, p. 684.

‡ Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte, 6 Aufl., 1 b., § 173.  
Theology, p. 556.





## SECTION XX.

### CIRCUMCISION.

WE might now let the whole question of the origin and propriety of infant baptism depend upon what we have already learned from the New Testament. For to go back of the New Testament to the Old, in order to find an evidence either for or against infant baptism, must strike every unprejudiced mind as a preposterous proceeding. Baptism is evidently an institution belonging to the New Testament alone, and from it alone it must derive its laws. Yet, most Pedobaptists go back from the constitution of the New Testament—the holy Commission of Christ in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, and Mark xvi. 15, 16—to the abrogated rites of the Old Testament, in order there to find a ground for infant baptism. Thither we, consequently, must accompany them, and there meet them on their own ground with the decided protest of the Gospel against any imaginary transfer of the ceremonies of the Old Testament to the New Testament dispensation.

The argument which Pedobaptists build on the Old Testament, rests on the three following grounds:

The covenant which God made with Abraham  
(178)

and his seed, was the covenant of grace—the same in its nature as that under which we live.

Circumcision was the *seal* of this covenant of grace, confirming all its blessings to Abraham, and to his posterity.

Baptism has in the New Testament *come in the place of circumcision*, and is now, as circumcision was in the Old Testament, the seal of the covenant of grace.

We will take up and briefly examine each of these grounds.

1. As to the first ground, it may be remarked : The *only* covenant under which we, as Christians, live, is that which God from eternity has purposed in Christ, Eph. iii. 11, and in the fullness of time established by His atoning death. This everlasting covenant became a covenant of promise at the fall of Adam, thus reading : “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” Gen. iii. 15. This covenant of promise was then narrowed down to the seed of Abraham in Gen. xii. 1–3, and xxii. 15, 16, where it is contained in one of the two promises given to Abraham, viz., in the promise that “in *his* seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.” Then it was narrowed down to Isaac’s line. Gen. xvii. 19, 21 ; xxi. 10, 12. Then to Jacob’s line. Gen. xxviii. 14. Then to the tribe of Judah. Gen. xlix. 10. Then to the seed of David. Ps. lxxxix. ; Isa. xi. ; Ez. xxxiv. and xxxvii. ; Hos. iii. And, at last, to our Lord and Saviour, who,

holding the goblet in His hand, said : "This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins." Matt. xxvi. 28 ; Luke xxii. 30 ; 1 Cor. xi. 25. And since "the God of peace had brought again our Lord Jesus from the dead, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant" (Heb. xiii. 20), and this "Mediator of the New Covenant"\* (Heb. ix. 15) had sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high to make intercession for believers (Heb. i. 3 ; Rom. viii. 34)—"the Covenant of Circumcision" (Acts vii. 8), "the First or Old Covenant" (Heb. viii. 7, 13), with its shadows and ceremonies, has ended, and a new order of things—"the New Covenant" (Heb. viii. 8)—has been introduced.

This is the Covenant of Grace. It was, as we have seen, a "Covenant of Promise" (Eph. ii. 12) to the Fathers, but has been reduced to a covenant of fact by Christ. It was revealed to the Fathers through the promise of Messiah, but was not actually established until the death of Christ. It was a covenant whose head was not Abraham, but Christ. Enoch, Noah, Lot, and Melchisedek, though they were not circumcised, were as well partakers of the benefits of this covenant, as the circumcised Abraham and his believing posterity ; and Abraham himself was as well a partaker of them before his

\* According to the original.

circumcision, as after it. See Gen. xv. and Rom. iv. It was not established with Abraham and his carnal progeny, but with the seed of Abraham, which was Christ. See Gal. iii. 16, 17.

The promise mentioned in Gen. xii. 1-3\* ought to be well distinguished from the Covenant of Cir-

\* That no proper *covenant* was here *established*, is evident from the fact, that no federal transaction here occurs. A covenant between God and man implies a mutual engagement, containing mercies on God's part made over to man, and conditions on man's part required of God. But here it is not said what God had done, nor what He now was doing, but only what He would do: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee." Nor was any *condition* required of Abraham. Compare Gen. xvii. Yet the word *covenant* is also used in an improper sense to signify the *sovereign decree* or *absolute promise* of God, respecting what He will do. See Gen. ix. 10, 11; Jer. xxxi. 31-35; xxxiii. 20, 25; Isa. lix. 21; Hos. ii. 18. It is in this latter signification and in the language of prophecy, that the *promises* occurring here and Gen. xxii. 18, are sometimes, in the Scriptures, called *covenants*.

It is to be observed, that the Scriptures speak only of *two real* covenants relating to the salvation of man (see Gal. iv. 24), viz., the First or Old Covenant, and the Second or New Covenant—the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace. The former began at the circumcision of Abraham (or if you choose, at the creation of man), was renewed at the giving of the law through Moses, and ended at the advent of our Saviour into the world. The latter was decreed from eternity, promised throughout the Old Testament, established by the death of Christ, and shall remain in all eternity. "The Covenant of Promise" could not properly be called a covenant, until it was publicly established by the death of Christ, and sealed by His blood. Hence, in relation to the Mosaic, it is properly called the "New Covenant."

cumcision, which is mentioned in Gen. xvii. This promise—which was renewed after the offering of Isaac, and confirmed by an oath (Gen. xxii. 18)—Abraham received twenty-four years previous to the establishment of the Covenant of Circumcision. It is, consequently, distinguished from the latter as to the time; but likewise, also, as to its nature. Here occurs a *free promise concerning Messiah*, without any mention of *circumcision* or any *other condition* on the part of Abraham. It was, therefore, of an entirely evangelical nature. On the other hand, in the institution of the Covenant of Circumcision there is *no promise concerning Messiah*, but *external conditions* and *severe threatenings*, from which it is evident that it was a *legal covenant*.

This difference is also intimated in the New Testament. Paul alludes to the former, when he says, Gal. iii. 8, “The Scripture *preached before the Gospel* unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” Further, he distinguishes it by calling it “the Covenant of *Promise*”—a name distinctly signifying its evangelical nature. But, on the contrary, he decidedly affirms that circumcision was a part of the law. See Rom. ii. 25; Gal. v. 2, 3. And Peter, likewise, mentions circumcision, as an intolerable *yoke* (Acts xv. 10), etc.

The *promise*, therefore, by which Abraham has been made “the Father” of believers and the “heir of the world,” and by which all believers in the

whole world should be blessed as the spiritual children of Abraham and his co-heirs, has nothing to do with the *Covenant of Circumcision*. Rom. iv. 9-13. They are as far distant from each other, as the Law is distant from the Gospel.

As to the Covenant of Circumcision especially, which was renewed at Sinai with all Israel,\* it may be remarked, that *this* covenant contained only the natural offspring of Abraham and those politically incorporated with them. The Lord intended, through this covenant and the Mosaic institution of the law, partly to separate the whole Israelitish people as a nation from all other nations in the world, and for this purpose, to give them a separate country where they could preserve their nationality ; partly to instruct them with His written revelation, and to keep up through them an unbroken genealogy from Abraham to the promised seed, our ever blessed Saviour, etc. But all this was destined to end in Christ.

Of this fact Jeremiah, among others, prophesies thus, ch. xxxi. 31-34 : "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a *new covenant*

\* That the Covenant of Circumcision made with Abraham, was identical with the Mosaic Covenant, and that the latter was only a continuation and further development of the former, we may learn from the words of our Saviour in John vii. 22, 23, where He declares that the law of *circumcision* was a part of the law of *Moses*, and that circumcision had originally been given to Abraham, and had come down from him to Moses.



with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah : *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers* in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt ; which my covenant they brake. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel : After those days, saith the Lord, *I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts ;* and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they *shall teach no more every man his neighbor,* and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they *shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them,* saith the Lord."

Hence it appears, that the New Covenant could not be *a part of* the Covenant of Circumcision, or *identical with it*. For how could it be said that the Lord would "make a new covenant with the house of Israel, not according to the covenant that He made with their fathers," if, according to the doctrine of the Pedobaptists, it had already been established with Abraham and all his posterity, and sealed with the seal of circumcision ? If the New Covenant had already *existed* before Christ, how could "a place have been sought for the second ?" Heb. viii. 7.

Again, it is evident that the Covenant of Circumcision was *abolished* in the establishing of the New. In Heb. viii. 6-13, where the prophecy of Jeremiah mentioned above, is quoted and explained, this is



expressly taught: "If that *first* covenant had been *faultless*, then should no place have been sought for the second. In that He saith, *A new* covenant, He hath made the first *old*. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away." The same we may learn from Heb. vii. 12, where it is said that "the law" and "the priesthood" were *changed*. Further, in ch. xii. 27, the entire old dispensation is represented as *shaken in its foundations and removed*: "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." The things that cannot be shaken and removed, are the blessings of the kingdom of Christ and the New Covenant: "Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved," etc., v. 28.

From all this, and from many other passages of Scripture,\* we may conclude, that the old Patri-

\* See, for example, Eph. ii. 15, where it is said that Christ has *abolished* the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain (that is, of Jews and heathen) *one new man*. On this, H. A. W. Meyer writes: "The Mosaic institution of the law, *as such*, and not only from a certain side, has ended in Christ; the shadow has receded for the body." Col. ii. 17. . . . "This one [man] is now neither Jew nor Greek—what they both (out of whom *the one* has been made) previously were—but both the parts have *laid aside their former religious and moral constitution*, and without any further difference, received *the entirely new being* on the ground of Christian faith."—Commentary on the passage.

See also Col. ii. 8-12; Acts xv. 1-30 (passages to which we

archal and Mosaic dispensation is abolished, and that nothing that belonged to that dispensation is obligatory under the new dispensation of grace, unless re-established and sanctioned by the New Testament. Whence it follows, that in looking for members of the church of Christ, we are not to seek them amongst the Patriarchs and Jews, but to inquire of Jesus Christ and His Apostles.

But who are included in the New Covenant and entitled to enjoy its peculiar privileges, we clearly learn from the above passages. Jer. xxxi. 31-34, and Heb. viii. 10, 11. Here we see, that while the Lord in the Old Testament kept covenant also with the ungodly, yet from the time of our Saviour He keeps covenant only with the regenerate, and says of the unregenerate children of believers, as He said in olden time of the carnal progeny of "*faithful Abraham*:" "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." Gen. xxi. 10; Gal. iv. 22-31. For of those who are included in the New Covenant, it is said, that they have the law of God written in their heart, and that they all, from the least unto the greatest, know the Lord, so that no one need to teach them, saying, Know the Lord. Can this be said of new-born children? Do *they* know the Lord, so that no one need to teach them, as soon as they

will further refer or return); and the Epistle to the Galatians. - It is a matter of astonishment, that any man can read this latter Epistle, and yet seriously affirm that the covenant of circumcision is still in force, and is the covenant of grace.

are capable of instruction, to *know the Lord*? If not, there are no new-born children included in this covenant.\* The doctrine that the Lord in the New Testament, as well as in the Old, keeps covenant with the *unconscious infants* of believers, is, therefore, directly opposed to the clear word of the Lord. Infants of Gentile believers are neither of Abraham's natural seed, nor of his spiritual seed; for it is only "believers" who are recognized as his spiritual seed. The children of believers must themselves become believers—possess the same faith with their parents, and

\* On the relation of infants to the New Covenant, Dr. A. Carson writes: "*Infants are not saved by the New Covenant*, and therefore they cannot be connected with it, in any view that represents them as interested in it. It is a vulgar mistake of theologians to consider, that they must be saved by the New Covenant. There is no such doctrine exhibited in any part of the book of God. Infants must be saved as sinners, and saved through the blood of Christ; but there was no necessity to give a covenant to man to ratify this. Whether all infants dying in infancy are saved, or only some infants, they are saved just as adults, as to the price of redemption, and as to the sanctification of their nature. But they are not saved as adults, *by the truth believed*. That sacrifice which is the ground of the New Covenant, is the salvation of saved infants; but there is no part of the word of God that intimates that it is *through faith* in that sacrifice. God, who applies that sacrifice to adults only through faith, can apply it to dying infants without faith—for faith is no merit more than works. . . . Who is he that will undertake to put a name (another's name) into God's covenant? What anti-christ will dare to take the throne of Jesus, and put a name into the Gospel grant?"—"Baptism in its Mode and Subjects." Philadelphia, 1853, p. 245.

be Christ's genuine disciples, in order to be included in the New Covenant. "Abraham *believed* God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye, therefore, that they which are *of faith*, the same (and no others) are the children of Abraham. So then they which are *of faith* are blessed with *faithful* Abraham." Gal. iii. 6-9.

Against the doctrine that the Covenant of Circumcision is now abolished, it does not militate that it is called "an everlasting covenant." Gen. xvii. 7. For the word "everlasting" here does not signify the endless duration of this covenant, but only its *perpetual* and *unalterable* force, until the coming of the Messiah. See Deut. xviii. 15 ; comp. Acts iii. 22 ; vii. 37. In this sense the word occurs also in Ex. xl. 15, where it is said of Aaron and his sons, that their "anointing should be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations." That is, this should be the perpetual and unalterable order, so long as the Aaronic priesthood should continue. But no one doubts that this priesthood has now been wholly superceded by that of Christ.

As to the second ground—viz., that "circumcision was the seal of the covenant of grace," etc.—it may be remarked :

The only passage in Scripture where circumcision is called a *seal*, is Rom. iv. 11, where it is said that Abraham "received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he* had, yet being uncircumcised." But this does not prove

that circumcision was a seal of the blessings of the covenant of grace to *all his posterity*. It is, indeed, said that circumcision was a *token* of the covenant between God and the seed of Abraham, Gen. xvii. 11. But a *seal* and a *token* are two different things. A seal *ratifies* a thing which was not before valid ; a token is only a *visible proof* that some other thing already exists. Circumcision, therefore, was no seal that ratified and gave a full validity to the covenant between God and the posterity of Abraham ; but only a *token* that such a covenant existed.

Again, that circumcision was not the seal of the covenant of *grace*, is evident from the fact that, such were circumcised as had no part in the promises given to Abraham, and such were left uncircumcised as had a part therein. It cannot be supposed that all the descendants of Abraham were partakers of the promises given to Abraham, either spiritual or temporal. Ishmael and the children of Keturah were included in this compact : " This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee ; every man-child among you shall be circumcised." Gen. xvii. 10. Yet, Ishmael was first cast out from the participation of the promises of this covenant. And then the children of Abraham by Keturah, whom " he sent away from Isaac his son (while he yet lived) unto the east country." Gen. xxv. 6. Now if circumcision had been the seal of participation in the Abrahamic

covenant and all its blessings, God would either have excepted these from the command to Abraham and his seed to circumcise "every man-child," or else He must have given the *seal*, but withdrawn the *reality sealed by it*.

Nor can it be supposed, that *all* slaves "born in the house, or bought with money," who, during the lapse of time, belonged to the people of Israel, had the faith of Abraham, and thus, as the spiritual seed of Abraham, were partakers of his blessing. Yet they were, according to Divine direction, to be circumcised even *against their will*. Gen. xvii. 12, 13. Circumcision could not be, to all these, a seal of the participation in the blessings of the covenant of grace. But, on the other hand, it cannot be doubted that many women in Israel had the faith of Abraham. Yet no woman was circumcised. Now, if circumcision had been the *seal* of participation in the blessings of the covenant of grace, would the Lord have withdrawn this seal from believing women in Israel? Nothing proves more decidedly that circumcision could not be the *seal* of participation in the blessing of the covenant of grace, than that the whole female sex—that is to say, *one-half* of "the seed of Abraham"—were not subject to circumcision.

The whole argument from the Abrahamic covenant, in support of infant baptism, rests *properly* on the third and last ground—that "baptism has come in the room of circumcision," etc. We might,



therefore, have left the two preceding grounds aside, had we not deemed it necessary to try every means to dispel the mist that has gathered around the Abrahamic Covenant in the minds of most Pedobaptists, and rendered them unable to see its true nature.

Now, finally, with respect to the last ground, it may be remarked, that no position can be more gratuitous and false than this. For first it is decidedly opposed to *the law of circumcision*. This law was a positive law, in distinction from the moral law. The distinction between positive and moral laws, it is of the highest moment to know and observe in regard to our present question. We wish, therefore, in the first place, to make some remarks concerning this distinction.

“*Moral precepts*,” says Bishop Butler, “are precepts the *reason* of which we *see*; *positive precepts* are precepts the *reason* of which we *do not see*. Moral duties arise out of *the nature of the case itself*, prior to external command; but positive duties do not arise out of the nature of the case, but from external command; nor would they be duties at all were it not for such command, received from Him whose creatures and subjects we are.”\*

The following examples may serve to spread light on the nature of positive laws.

\* “*Analogy*,” part 2, ch. 1.



Adam and Eve were, from their creation, under moral obligation to love and serve God ; but they were not under positive law till God said, " Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Gen. iii. 3. Adam and Eve violated this positive law, and brought by that means the curse, and death over all their posterity.

The sprinkling of the blood of the Paschal Lamb on the door posts was an act in itself indifferent. But the positive command of God clothed it with an importance on which not only life or death depended, but in the performance or neglect of which was implied personal innocence or guilt.

God had decreed that the sons of Kohath, who were Levites, should *bear* the Ark of the Covenant on their shoulders whenever it was moved, and that they should not touch it, lest they died. Here was a positive statute, both mandatory and prohibitory. But when David removed the Ark from Gibeah to the house of Obed-edom, the positive command was violated by placing it on "a new cart." And Uzzah, who drove the cart, "put forth his hand to the Ark of God" to steady it. But "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him there for his *error* ; and there he died by the Ark of God." 2 Sam. vi.

Removing the Ark on a cart, and putting forth a hand to steady it, were palpable violations of the

law; and God vindicated His authority in a summary manner.

Hence, we may clearly perceive the nature of a positive law. It rests entirely on the distinctly and decidedly expressed will of God, and requires a punctual obedience, without assigning any reason or motive for obedience.

Now, such a law was the law of circumcision. Circumcision was a duty which could not be inferred from a *general moral law*—it was a duty which could be known only from a distinct and especial prescription. It was *no* duty before it was expressly commanded, nor to those on whom it was not expressly enjoined. But since a positive law for it was given to the Hebrews, this law must be obeyed *according to its letter*, so long as it was valid. The law did not leave the least liberty to “add” or to “take away;” and on the punctual obedience to it depended, whether those subjected to it should be “cut off from the people,” or not. Gen. xvii. 14.

The position that baptism has taken the place of circumcision—so that “baptism in the New Testament is what circumcision was in the Old,” and that the *Covenant of Circumcision* still is in force, but that its *seal* has been altered—is, consequently, in direct opposition to the law of Circumcision. This law forbids explicitly the observance of any other rite than circumcision, as its token, while it remains. “Thou shalt keep my covenant there-

fore—THIS is my COVENANT, which ye shall keep—every man-child among you shall be CIRCUMCISED. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and my covenant shall be in your FLESH for an EVERLASTING COVENANT. And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.” Gen. xvii. 9-14.

How in the face of this express law can any man affirm that the seal of the Covenant of Circumcision is altered, but that the covenant itself remains? Is not circumcision declared to be as everlastingly binding, as the covenant itself? And is it not expressly said that the man-child whose foreskin is not circumcised, has broken the covenant, and is therefore to be cut off from the people? Therefore, there is here no possibility of a substitute under the covenant. The law of circumcision is either to be kept *literally* and punctiliously, or it must have been totally abolished, without having any thing introduced in its place to be observed on the same principles.

But let us now observe what liberties the Pedobaptists have taken with this covenant and law of circumcision, while they claim that it is still in force—that they are living under it, and enjoying its privileges.

They have greatly extended it. The covenant, by its very terms, is limited to Abraham and his

natural seed, and to such persons from other nations as should be incorporated into the family or nation by purchase, etc. But they have extended it to Christians among all nations and their natural seed ; and they have made this extension not only without any thing like a Divine warrant for it, but in direct opposition to the decision of the Apostles and the Holy Ghost. Acts. xv. 18.

They have changed its appointed rite from circumcision to baptism, or more generally, to sprinkling or pouring a little water in the face of the subject.

They have changed the subjects of the rite. The covenant limits the rite to *males*—they have extended their substitute to *females*. The covenant requires that its rite shall be administered to children at eight days old ; they administer their substitute to children from the natal hour up to any age within the limits of minority.

Such changes the Pedobaptists have made with the positive law of circumcision, in order, as they suppose, to secure to their infants a part in the blessings of the Covenant. But we ask : Do not Pedobaptists by this conduct condemn themselves ? For if that Covenant be now binding, why should they comply with the law of circumcision more in one respect than in another ? Where has God released them from the obligation to keep the *whole* law of circumcision ? Or did ever the God of Abraham approve of a *mutilated* obedience ?

In *the second place*, the position that baptism has been substituted for circumcision, has no foundation in the New Testament. The only passage Pedobaptists have been able, with any plausibility, to quote in support of this position, is Col. ii. 11, 12. But this passage, so far from containing any evidence in favor of the Pedobaptist view, on the other hand, proves the very contrary. Let us hear the passage speak for itself.

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh : by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism ; wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.” Col. ii. 11.

These verses, taken in connection with the preceding and following, prove, in the first place, that Christians have nothing at all to do with the Covenant of Circumcision. “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world,\* and not after Christ. And ye are complete in Him,

\* “This expression in itself comprises the ritual observances of Judaism and heathenism.”—H. A. W. Meyer’s Commentary on the passage.

“What is meant by the phrase—elements of the world? There can be no doubt that it means ceremonies. For he immediately afterward adduces one instance by way of example—*circumcision*.”—Calvin’s Commentary on the passage.

in whom also ye are circumcised. . . . And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him—blotting out the handwriting\* of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.”

Here we find that Paul had to contend with false teachers, who taught that circumcision, together with many other “rudiments of the world,” or Jewish ceremonies, were necessary to be observed by Christians. In order to meet these, he first teaches that Christians had no need to observe the rudiments of the world, or the Jewish ceremonies, etc., thereby to be *filled* with divine wisdom and grace. “For in Christ,” he says, “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” “And ye are,” he adds, “complete in Him,” as united with Him; so that ye need not now first be made complete by means of worshipping the angels (v. 18), and observing the gorgeous ceremonies of Judaism. And, especially, ye need not observe the Jewish circumcision; for “ye are” already “circumcised” with a circumcision far better than the Jewish, viz., with “the circumcision of Christ.” This circumcision, he further adds, is “not made with hands” (Rom.

\* “Handwriting. Thus the Mosaic law is characterized. . . . The law is to be understood as an all-comprehending whole, and limitations to the ceremonial law, or the moral law, are entirely opposed to the context and the doctrine of Paul.”—H. A. W. Meyer’s Commentary on the passage.



ii. 29), as the Jewish, but is an invisible, spiritual circumcision of the heart (Deut. xxx. 6), effected without interposition of man. It is not only an outward separation of a little part of your flesh, but a putting off the whole "body of the sins of the flesh, the body of sin." Rom. vi. 6. But ye have not only, by this spiritual circumcision, put off the body of sin, as one puts off his natural body in death; but as burial naturally is consequent upon death, so this body of sin has also been buried by your being "buried with Christ in baptism." But still more—ye are also "risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God." Thus ye have already *in Christ* all that is needful and desirable. "Wherefore, if ye," in this way, "be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world," and live a new life—as in a new world—"with Christ in God;" "why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances" (v. 20), which are now blotted out, taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross of Christ?

That the Apostle, by this reasoning, declares that Christians are not "subject" to the law of circumcision, is evident. But if this reasoning be conclusive in showing that the rite of circumcision is unnecessary, it is conclusive, also, against the supposition, that any other rite has come in the room of circumcision, and is administered on the same grounds, or that circumcision *in substance continues*



in the Christian church, having only been changed in form.

In order to prove that baptism has come in the room of circumcision, Pedobaptists assert that the Apostle in this passage represents the circumcision of the New Testament as effected in and by means of baptism. But our text does not furnish any ground either for their assertion or their argument.

For, in the first place, the Apostle does not say that the Colossians were circumcised "with the circumcision of Christ," in that they were buried with Him by baptism, as some falsely explain the passage; but according to the original and the English version, he expresses himself thus: "In whom also ye are circumcised, etc., buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through faith," etc. The Apostle here reminds the Colossians, as in Rom. vi. 3-11 the Romans, of *three* important facts which had taken place with them. They had been (1) *dead* ("in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh"—"baptized into His *death*," Rom. vi. 3.); (2) *buried* ("buried with Him in baptism"—"buried with Him by baptism," Rom. vi. 4); (3) *risen from the dead* ("wherein also ye are risen with Him"—"that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, so we also should walk in newness of life"—"likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but *alive* unto God." Rom. vi. 4, 11.) The burial and resurrection in and from baptism, are not here represented

as the means by which the circumcision of Christ had been effected, but as consequences from this circumcision, which consisted "*in* putting off the body of the flesh" ("*circumcised—in* putting off the body of the sins of the flesh"). The Colossians were circumcised without hands—in the circumcision of Christ—in the circumcision of the heart, in the spirit (Rom. ii. 29)—in the putting off of the body of sin through faith; and the remains of this circumcision they had committed to the watery grave, from which they had risen again to walk in newness of life.

If the Apostle had meant to say, that the Colossians had been circumcised with the circumcision of Christ, *effected* by a burial with Christ in baptism, he would have taught that this circumcision had been made by an outward act, since baptism cannot take place without hands. But immediately before, he declares that this circumcision had not taken place by means of an outward act: "Ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands." Can we charge the Apostle with such a self-contradiction?

The contrast indicated in our passage, is evidently not between two external rites, one of which may be disregarded since the other has been introduced in its stead, but between the outward circumcision and "the circumcision of heart, in the spirit." That which is made with hands, the Jewish circumcision, is not required, *because* that which is made

without hands, the circumcision of Christ, has been experienced. Comp. Eph. ii. 11; Phil. iii. 3.

But, in the second place, if it could be proved that the Colossians had experienced the circumcision of Christ in and by *means of* baptism, that would not be any evidence that baptism had come in the room of circumcision. It would only prove, that Christians are delivered from circumcision as a yoke of bondage (Acts xv. 10), *because* they had received baptism as a far more significant evangelical ordinance. But it could not be any evidence that baptism is to be performed on the same principles as circumcision. We make no objection to the sentiment that there is in *some* respects a similarity between baptism and circumcision.\* But this does as little prove that baptism has come in the room of circumcision, as the fact that there was a similarity between the ark of Noah and baptism (1 Pet. iii. 21) proves that the latter has come in the place of the former. With all the circumstantial similarity that may exist between the two ordinances, they differ as essentially as the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Circumcision.

Instead of proving that circumcision in the New Testament continues to be valid under the form of baptism, the passage, as well as the similar one in

\* For example, *as* circumcision, in the Old Testament, belonged to the natural seed of Abraham, by virtue of fleshly birth, *so*, in the New Testament, baptism belongs to his spiritual seed, by virtue of regeneration through faith.

Rom. vi. 3-11, clearly intimates that infant baptism did not exist in the apostolic churches. For *all* baptized in Colosse and Rome are represented as risen with Christ from the grave of baptism "through faith," in order immediately after baptism to "walk in newness of life." And as this cannot apply to *infants*, no such were baptized in these churches, and, consequently, none in the other apostolic churches. See further, concerning Rom vi. 3, the note, p. 133.

If baptism were a substitute for circumcision, something clear and unambiguous must have been said about it in the New Testament. The circumstances of the church, as they are represented in the Acts and Epistles, were such as to render silence in regard to such a fact as this, on the part of the Apostles, absolutely impossible. There was a schism among the Christians on this very question—whether Gentile Christians were bound to observe circumcision, or not—a schism which would have been healed by just insisting that baptism had taken the place of circumcision.

If this were so, Paul could not have failed to mention it in the Epistle to the Galatians, among whom circumcision was strongly urged as necessary to salvation, just as many Pedobaptists in our time urge infant baptism as necessary to salvation. Now, if baptism held the place of circumcision, as the "seal" of the covenant, the covenant itself remaining in full force, the controversy would easily have

been settled by the simple remark, on the part of the Apostle, that Gentile Christians had no need of being circumcised, since they had received baptism, which in the New Testament had taken the place of circumcision. For who could, in that case, have contended that those who had been *baptized* must also be *circumcised*? Who would have thought of two "seals," at the same time, of the same covenant? But there is not a word intimating any such thing, while every thing in this Epistle makes against it.

If it were so, moreover, something would necessarily have been mentioned about it in the Apostolic Council at Jerusalem. Acts xv. We find there, that when some zealously urged that baptized Gentile Christians could not be saved unless they were circumcised, a council was held at Jerusalem by the Apostles and the church, "to consider of this matter." Now, if it had been the known appointment of Christ that baptism had taken the place of circumcision, and, consequently, the Gentile Christians already had received baptism instead of circumcision, would it not have been the imperative duty of the Apostles to inform Christians of such a fact, especially as "much debate had arisen" at the Council concerning "this matter." But though Peter, on the ground of his own experience of the fact that God had "purified" even the hearts of *uncircumcised* Gentiles through faith, argues that they ought not to impose the yoke of the law and

circumcision on Gentile Christians; yet he makes no mention of baptism having come in the place of circumcision, and thus rendered it superfluous. Nor does James, after hearing the experience of Peter related, make any mention of it, while he lays down this as his decided judgment, that they should not "*trouble* them which from among the Gentiles have turned to God," with keeping the law and circumcision. How needful would it not here have been to add the plain reason, that since baptism now was the appointed seal of the covenant instead of circumcision, to impose circumcision upon them would be inconsistent and absurd. Likewise in the declaration given by the Apostles, the elders, and the whole church in common—together with "the Holy Ghost"—to the Christians at Antioch, there is not the least intimation that they considered baptism as a substitute for circumcision, though they expressly declared that they needed not observe circumcision. Thus we here see circumcision for Gentile Christians expressly abolished, but nothing proposed in its room.\*

\* That circumcision is of right abolished also for *Jewish Christians*, is clear from what we already have learned. 1 Cor. vii. 19. The "priesthood" and "law" are "changed," not for a part of Christ's church only, but for the *whole* (Heb. vii. 12—see pp. 184–186); consequently, the law of circumcision which was a *part* of the Mosaic law, must also have been changed for the whole church. Christ has "abolished" *the whole law*, and made of the two, Jews and Gentiles, not an *old man*, retaining each a peculiar church constitution, but a "*new man*" (Eph. ii. 14–18,



Against the assertion that baptism has taken the place of circumcision, we have, also, a decisive argument in Acts xxi. 20, 21, 25. Here James and the elders at Jerusalem, say to Paul, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law. And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe NO SUCH THING." But we ask, did they not teach the Gentiles to observe baptism, which according to Pedo-

see p. 185, the note), who was no more "Jew or Greek," but "*one* in Christ Jesus," etc. Gal. iii. 26-29.

The fact that the Jewish converts practiced circumcision in the apostolic age, does not affect this argument. There were many reasons why the Jewish converts did not at once forsake their old ritual. Under the circumstances this was hardly to be expected. The Apostles themselves were full of Jewish prejudices when they began their work, and it was not without much instruction of the Holy Spirit, added to much study and observation, that they were able to surmount them (see, for instance, Acts x.); could their converts, without those advantages, be expected at once to rise above such prejudices? The Gospel day dawned with the ministry of John. And as the morning twilight of the Gospel day began *before the death of Christ*, so some shades of the Jewish night, or rather, morning clouds and mists, might be expected to remain some time *after that*, hovering about the solemn and splendid Temple at Jerusalem, affecting in a certain degree the minds, and obscuring the perceptions of the Jewish Christians while it stood.



baptists, is substantially THE SAME THING with circumcision—a token and seal of the same covenant, its appointed substitute, to be applied to the same description of persons, founded on the same law, and occupying the same place in the Divine economy? And could they do that, and then say that they had commanded the Gentiles that they observe NO SUCH THING as circumcision?

The assertion that “baptism in the New Testament is the seal of the Covenant of Grace,” has, like all other arguments in favor of infant baptism, not a particle of foundation in Scripture. Baptism is an act of obedience, by which we put on and publicly confess Christ. But it is never in the Bible represented as a seal. The Christian has a more exalted seal than any outward ordinance, viz., the Holy Spirit, “whereby he is sealed unto the day of redemption.” Eph. iv. 30. When sinners believe in Christ, they are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is “the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” Eph. i. 13. The seal, then, that comes in the room of circumcision, is the seal of the Spirit.

Finally, it ought not be overlooked, that according to Acts xxi. 20, 21, “many thousands of Jews,” with the consent of the Apostles, continued a long time to “circumcise their children.” Would they be likely at the same time to *baptize* them?

## TESTIMONIES.

DR. A. NEANDER : " If we wish to ascertain from whom this institution (infant baptism) was originated, we should say, certainly not immediately from Christ himself. Was it from the primitive church in Palestine, from an injunction given by the earlier Apostles ? But among the Jewish Christians, circumcision was held as a seal of the covenant, and hence they had so much less occasion to make use of another dedication for their children. Could it then have been Paul who first, among Gentile Christians, introduced this alteration, by the use of baptism ? But this would agree least of all with the peculiar characteristics of this Apostle. He who says of himself, that " Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel ;" he who always kept his eyes fixed on one thing—justification by faith—and so carefully avoided every thing which could give a handle or support to the notion of a justification by outward things, how could he have set up infant baptism against the circumcision that continued to be practiced by the Jewish Christians ?"\*

PROFESSOR STUART : " How unwary, too, are many excellent men, in contending for infant baptism on the ground of the Jewish analogy of circumcision ! Are females not proper subjects of

\* " Planting and Training of the Christian Church," p. 102.

baptism? And again, are a man's slaves to be all baptized because he is? Are they church members?—of course, when they are so baptized. Is there no difference between engrafting into a politico-ecclesiastical community, and into one of which it is said, that it is not of this world: in short, numberless difficulties present themselves in our way, as soon as we begin to argue in such a manner as this.”\*

\* On Old Testament, § 22, p. 395.

## PART II.

### TESTIMONIES FROM THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

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#### SECTION I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

WE have now considered all the passages, both of the New and Old Testament, that either expressly mention baptism, or, with and without ground, have been thought to allude to it; and we renew the question: Where is the passage in Holy Writ that furnishes any support for infant baptism? In vain do we seek for it in the Gospels, in the Acts, in the Epistles, or in the Old Testament. And this is conceded even by the most distinguished theologians among the Pedobaptists themselves. (See pp. 174–177.) But while Pedobaptists have not found any firm footing in the Scriptures, they direct us to the history of the Christian Church, maintaining that according to it infant baptism must have its origin in the Apostolic

time, and that sprinkling and pouring, instead of immersion, can be traced up at the same time.

On this we remark : Were these assertions consistent with truth, they still would fail to shake our conviction of the only true law of Christian baptism, inasmuch as it is built on that firm rock—the Word of God—which shall endure even when heaven and earth have passed away. The word of the Lord, such as it is delivered to us in Holy Scripture, is the only firm and sure foundation ; but as soon as we step without its limits—the covers of the Bible—all is uncertain and unreliable. As nothing new happens under the sun, so error did not spring up first yesterday or to-day, but counts its descent as far back as from the Fall. It did not cease to flourish even when the light of truth, through the Apostles of the Lord, shone brightest in the world. Whosoever peruses attentively the writings of the New Testament, will, there, already recognize the germ of all the principal doctrinal errors that in subsequent times have troubled the church of Christ. That doctrine of gross self-righteousness, that monkery, that prohibition of marriage, that denial of the true Christ, that false philosophy, etc., which afterward so generally prevailed in Christendom, did they not early spread in the apostolic churches a great desolation, and awaken the utmost anxiety in the Apostles ? Whence Paul also testifies that “ the mystery of iniquity,” (2 Thess. ii. 7), which after-

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ward should be made manifest in a general apostacy throughout Christendom, was already working in his time. If, therefore, any trace of the existence of infant baptism in the Apostles' time could be found, that would prove nothing else than that, among many other errors, even this leaven, not the least injurious, had begun to ferment and corrupt the church. We consider, therefore, the testimonies furnished by church history not as a necessary supplement to the testimonies of Scripture, as if these alone were not sufficient to establish the true doctrine of baptism ; but only as an occasional confirmation of an already established truth, and a further refutation of the weak objections against the true doctrine of baptism which Pedobaptists have tried to deduce from the history of the Christian Church.

After these preliminary remarks, we shall now adduce the principal records contained in church history concerning the *origin* and *existence* of *infant baptism* during the first ages of the Christian church, as well as the *mode* in which baptism has been administered during all times.

## SECTION II.

### BAPTISM IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE, OR THE FIRST CENTURY.

As we seek in vain to find any allusion to infant baptism in the New Testament, we are also met with an entire and significant silence concerning it from the most ancient records of church history. Not one of the so-called "Apostolic Fathers,"—Barnabas, Clemens Romanus, Hermas, Ignatius, or Polycarpus,—either expressly alludes to it, or says any thing that may be referred to infant baptism; but, on the other hand, their writings contain many passages where the baptism of believers is mentioned. The unanimous silence of the Apostolic Fathers concerning infant baptism, while they often mention the baptism of believers, goes far to prove that they, as well as the New Testament, knew nothing of the baptism of infants.

It is worthy of notice, that while many Pedobaptists affirm that infant baptism may be traced in the writings of the Fathers up to the very times of the Apostles, they affirm it in opposition to the *standard* ecclesiastical historians and divines among the Pedobaptists themselves. We have already



adduced, (pp. 104, 207,) and will, further on, quote testimonies against the apostolical origin of infant baptism by Neander, the most eminent ecclesiastical historian of our time, and it may well be added, of all times. To his testimony, which alone might be sufficient, we wish only to add the following :

DR. H. A. W. MEYER : (whose opinion of infant baptism we have also previously seen, p. 104) : "Baptism, without instruction and faith, never appears in the Scripture, and is contrary to Matt. xxviii. 19. *The early and continued opposition to infant baptism would have been inexplicable if it had been an undoubted apostolical institution.*"\*

PROFESSOR HAHN : "Neither in the Scriptures, nor during the first hundred and fifty years, is a sure example of infant baptism to be found, and we must concede that the numerous opposers of it cannot be contradicted on gospel ground."†

BAUMGARTEN CRUSIUS : "Infant baptism is not supported either by a distinct apostolical tradition,‡ or by the practice of the Apostles."

\* Commentary on Acts xvi. 15.

† Theology, p. 556.

‡ Even if it were, it would give *no certainty*, much less *Divine authority*. How little tradition is to be relied on, appears from the fact that even the first disciples were deceived when they listened to its voice. On one occasion Christ said, in reference to John, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Tradition immediately distorted the question into an assertion : "Then went that saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die." (John xxi. 22, 23.) Here tradition uttered a falsehood, and taught, as usual, a lie.

MATTHIES: "*In the first two centuries there are no documents that clearly prove the existence of infant baptism at that time. Both Wall and Bingham trace infant baptism back as far as to the apostolic time, by doing violence to historical evidence.*"\*

More such testimonies by Mosheim, Olshausen, Winer, Schleiermacher, Gieseler, Münscher, De Wette, Curcellous, Salmasius, Suarius, &c., might be mentioned.†

\* Hist. of Theology, p. 1203.

† Expositio Baptismatis, p. 187.

### SECTION III.

#### BAPTISM IN THE SECOND CENTURY.

AMONG the Church Fathers of the second century, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, are the most renowned. As Pedobaptists have sought to find in these Fathers evidence for the apostolic origin of infant baptism, we shall enter into a somewhat closer examination of the passages in their writings which have been supposed to refer to infant baptism.

#### JUSTIN MARTYR.

The passage in this Father, which has been quoted by some Pedobaptists in defense of infant baptism, is of the following effect: "Several persons among us of sixty and seventy years old, of both sexes, who *were disciplined* to Christ *from their childhood*, do continue uncorrupted."\*

The supposition that this passage alludes to infant baptism, rests on the expressions "were disciplined," and "from their childhood." The former of those expressions corresponds to the Greek word "*Ematheteuthesan*," which is also used in

\* Wall. "Hist. of Infant Baptism," part i., ch. ii., sec. 6.

the Commission, Matt. xxiii. 19. Now let us ask: How can this word, which always implies instruction, have reference to new-born children that are not able to receive any instruction? The latter expression, from "childhood," (*ek paidoon*), is used for the most part of the age between ten and fifteen years, while two other words, (*brephos* and *paidion*), are used to signify *infancy*. The meaning of this passage, consequently, is that many who in their childhood had received Christian instruction and been converted, had persevered in an unblamable Christian conduct to their old age. Any allusion to baptism is not here to be found; but if they had been baptized in their childhood, they had previously been made disciples by means of instruction.

That this is the true meaning of our passage is confirmed by

SEMISON (Lutheran): "Whenever Justin refers to baptism, adults appear as the objects to whom the sacred rite is administered. Of an *infant baptism* he knows nothing. The traces of it which some persons believe they have detected in his writings, are groundless fancies artificially produced. In the words: 'Many men and women, sixty and seventy years old, who from children have been disciples of Christ, persevere in their continence,'—nothing more is said than that many individuals of both sexes *became disciples of Christ in early life*. The idea of *matheteuesthai* does

not necessarily include that of being baptized; it merely brings before our minds a catechumen. And even admitting that the baptismal rite was included in *matheteuesthai*, this by no means is decisive of a reference to infant baptism. *Ek paidoon* (from children) contrasted with 'sixty and seventy years old,' may well denote the entrance of the period of youth."\*

MATTHIES: "Though the formula *matheteuesthai tini* undeniably signifies *to be a disciple of such a one*, yet this signification by no means contains the idea that that disciple has been already baptized; for one can be called a disciple, who, though he has not received baptism, is eagerly learning the doctrines of Christ, and is therefore taught the gospel. It is this which Justin seems to have had in mind. For he himself, in another place, giving an account of baptism, relates that *only those who believe the things they are taught*, so as to be persuaded that they can live in a Christian manner, are brought to baptism. It is thus evident that in Justin's opinion, baptism is to be given *after* believing in Christ. Nothing else, therefore, is contained in that saying of Justin's, than that many *instructed in the gospel from an early age remain continent*."†

\* Monograph on the Life and Works of Justin, vol. 2, pp. 334, 335.

† *Expositio Baptismatis*, p. 187. See the "Christian Review," Boston, vol. 3, p. 198.

With these testimonies agree Winer, Rheinwald, Münscher, Hahn, Lange, and nearly all the German writers. Far from rendering any support to infant baptism, Justin, on the other hand, affords in another passage a decisive testimony *against* it. This passage is to be found in his Second Apology to the emperor Antoninus Pius, and reads thus :

“I will now relate the manner in which we, having been renewed by Christ, dedicate ourselves to God, lest, if I omit this, I shall seem to deal in some respect perversely in this account. As many as *are persuaded and believe* that the things taught by us are true, and promise to live according to them, are directed first to pray and ask of God, with fasting, the forgiveness of their former sins ; we praying and fasting together with them. Afterward they are conducted by us to *some place where there is water*, and after the same way of regeneration whereby we were ourselves regenerated, they are regenerated. For they then take a bath in the water in the name of the Lord God, and Father of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. . . . And now, in reference to this thing (viz., baptism, including all the transactions described), *we have learned from the Apostles* this reason : because we, being ignorant of our first birth, was generated by necessity, . . . and have been brought up in its customs and conversation, that we should no longer remain children of *necessity* and ignorance, but of *choice* and *knowledge*,

and that we may obtain in the water remission of the sins in which we had before transgressed,—the name of the Lord God, and Father of all, is pronounced over him who *chooses* to be regenerated\* and *repents* of his sins, etc.”

In how many ways does not “this account” make against that baptism which in the latter ages was so generally received in Christendom! Justin is giving the emperor a full statement of the administration of baptism in the entire Christian body. All the subjects of baptism, he says, are “persuaded and believe,” “promise to live according to our doctrine,” and seek “with fasting the forgiveness of their sins, we fasting and praying with them;” and they are then “conducted to some place where there is water,” to be baptized. In baptism they are not “children of necessity and ignorance, but of choice and knowledge.” The candidate repents of his sins, and chooses to be baptized.

\* Justin evidently attached to the primitive baptism of penitent believers some ideas not warranted by the Scriptures, which never speak of baptism as regeneration, or of the remission of sins being received in the water. His incautious use of language in reference to this ordinance as originally administered to believers, led others to still wider departures from the simplicity and truth of the Scriptures. We are bound here to remember the words of our Lord: “Call no man master upon earth, for *one is your Master, even Christ*, and all ye are brethren.” Matt. xxiii. 9, 10. How much mischief has resulted from misinterpretation of Scripture by the early Fathers, it is not our business to decide.



How does this agree with infant baptism now in use? Are unconscious children in baptism, children of choice and knowledge? Are they persuaded? Do they believe the doctrine of Christ, and engage to live according to it? Do they fast and pray for the forgiveness of sins? Do they repent of their sins? Compare the language of Justin with the following from Augustine, written some two centuries and a half later, when infant baptism was well established. "Children," he says, "who can neither *will* nor *refuse* either good or evil, are nevertheless *compelled* to be holy and righteous when, *struggling and crying with tears against it*, they are regenerated by holy baptism. For, doubtless, dying before the use of reason, they will be holy and righteous in the kingdom of God, through grace, to which they come not by their own ability, but by *necessity*."\* This language is perfectly consistent with infant baptism, but that of Justin is as decidedly opposed to it.

It is to be observed that the number of children of Christians at the time of Justin must have been very great, and if they all were baptized, infant baptism must have been an important part of the rites of the Christians, whereof Justin here was giving an account. Now he professed to give such a complete and exact statement of the doctrines and rites of the Christians, that he might not, by

\* Emerson's Wigger's Augustinism and Pelagianism, p. 12.

“omitting” some important thing, be considered to “deal perversely in some part of his account.” But if infant baptism at this time was prevailing in the Christian Church, this account would certainly have been both unfair and untrue; for it affirms of all, such things that would have been true with respect to one part only. Could any missionary among the Pedobaptists of our time, a hundred years after the introduction of Christianity in any country, give such an account as this to a heathen emperor? Could he, with any appearance of sincerity, compose his account so as not to leave any room for infant baptism in it?

A more conclusive evidence against infant baptism from church history, than this, it is impossible to conceive of. Had Justin said in express terms: “Baptism is to be administered *only* to believers; *infants* may not be baptized,” while his testimony against it would have been explicit, it would also have strongly implied that there were some in that day who thought that infants ought to be baptized, and hence, that the rite then was in existence. But by simply describing baptism, and the principles on which it was administered, in such a way as totally to exclude the conception of infant baptism, it is a demonstration that it neither existed, nor was so much as thought of at that time. It is just such a testimony against infant baptism as would be desired. And this is the nature of the testimony against infant baptism, both in the New Testa-

ment and the earliest Christian writers. It is not a contradiction of it in express terms; this would prove its actual existence, but it is a most perfect negation of it: a clear evidence that any such thing as is called infant baptism did not exist in the primitive church.

This testimony becomes still more important, if we consider that Justin, in the first place, declares that he and his cotemporaries had "learned" how they should act at baptism, "*from the Apostles*;" and that he, in the second place, lived very near to the apostolic time, yea, was, according to Dr. Wall (the famous defender of infant baptism), born in the Apostles' time, and wrote about forty years after it.\*

Finally, it is not to be overlooked that at the time of Justin, penitent and believing disciples were "conducted to some place where there was water," there to be baptized by immersion, while the Pedobaptists of our time usually *carry the water* to the candidate.

#### IRENÆUS.

The passage which has been most relied on in support of infant baptism, is the following of Ire-

\* "History of Infant Baptism, Oxford, 1844, vol. 4, p. 511." Dr. Wall remarks: "A testimony of Justin's is more considerable than of five or six later ones. Any words of his that should plainly and expressly determine either *for* or *against* infant baptism, would be a more material and decisive evidence than any that has yet been produced from antiquity on either side." Ibid.

næus, bishop at Lyons about the year 170 after Christ :

“Therefore, as He (Christ) was a Master, He had also the age of a Master ; not disdaining nor going in a way above *human* nature, nor breaking, in his own person, the law which He had made for mankind, but sanctifying every several age by the likeness that it has to Himself ; for He came to save all persons *by Himself*—all, I mean, who by Him are *regenerated unto God*, infants, and little ones, and children, and elder persons. Therefore, He *went through* the several ages : for infants being made an infant, *sanctifying* infants ; and also giving an example of godliness, justice, and dutifulness : among the youths a youth, becoming an example to the youths, and *sanctifying* them to the Lord : thus, also, an elderly person among elderly persons, that He might be a perfect Master among all, not only in respect to the presentation of truth, but also in respect to the age, *sanctifying* at the same time the elderly persons, and becoming to them an example : thus, too, He *passed through* even unto death, that He might be the first-born from the dead, Himself holding the primary in all things, the Prince of Life, superior to all, and preceding all.”\*

On this passage, Rev. Barnas Sears, D.D., President of Brown University, writes : “Every thing

\* Iren. *adv. Hær.*, lib. 2, c. 22, § 4. Ed. Bened, 1710.

here turns on the meaning of *renascuntur* (are born again). If it means *they were regenerated*, then it has nothing to do with our subject; if it means *they were baptized*, then it proves the existence of infant baptism in the time of Irenæus. This question cannot be settled, as many have thought, by an appeal to later writers, for the idea of baptismal regeneration was of gradual growth, and in every successive period, from the Apostles to the middle ages, words were changed in their meaning, to correspond with the change of ideas! The scholastic writers attach more to the word than Chrysostom and Gregory, and these more than Irenæus and Justin Martyr."

After a most elaborate investigation of passages in the writings of Irenæus, with respect to this question, Dr. Sears comprises the results of his examination under the following points:

"1. The phrase, 'regenerated through Christ unto God,' if it means the general recovery of man through Christ's incarnation and redemption, has numerous parallels in the writings of Irenæus; if it mean '*baptized through Christ unto God*,' it has *no* parallel—*absolutely none*.

"2. The phrase, 'baptism through Christ unto God,' is an incongruous idea, nowhere to be found in the Scriptures, in the writings of Irenæus, or in any other Father or writer, ancient or modern.

"'Regeneration,' standing alone without any such word as 'baptism,' or 'bath,' prefixed, and

governing it in the genitive, *never means baptism in Irenæus.*

“4. That Christ sanctified infants by becoming an infant himself, has several parallels in Irenæus. ‘He became an infant to aid our weak apprehension.’ ‘He became an infant with us (*sunencpiazēn*) on this account.’ ‘He went into Egypt, sanctifying the infants that were there.’ It would be absurd to suppose that the infant Jesus *baptized* the Egyptian infants.

“5. That by passing through the several stages of human life, from infancy to old age, He sanctified human nature in these various ages by his own incarnation and example, is an idea often repeated by Irenæus, and by modern writers, too, as Sartorius. But, if this be limited to baptism, or to the baptized, it will contradict what he elsewhere says.

“6. The general character of His redemption and regeneration, as expressed in this passage, according to our interpretation, is a favorite idea by our author; a similar sentiment in regard to *baptism*, is not to be found in his writings.

“7. The connection of the latter part of the sentence with the former, as explaining or amplifying the idea, is weakened, if not destroyed, by the other interpretation.”

That the interpretation above is consistent with the truth, ought, at a closer consideration of our passage, to be evident to every one; and no one, unless he seeks for something that never came into

the mind of Irenæus, can here find an evidence for infant baptism. For the passage only teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to save mankind, has sanctified every several age by passing, Himself, through all the stages of life. But that new-born children needed not to be baptized in order to be partakers of that sanctifying, is evident from the fact that our Saviour, according to another passage in Irenæus, "after his birth was carried to Egypt, to sanctify the infants there." "Why should He sanctify the infants in Egypt, if they could have no use of it without baptism?" Again, the connection directs our attention to Christ Himself: it is by Himself, not by baptism, He saves: it is "by Him," not by baptism, men "are regenerated unto God."\* If the expression *regenerated* here meant *baptized*, that would convey the absurd idea that no others could be saved than those who had been baptized by Christ himself personally; for it reads: "He came to save all persons by himself—*all*, I mean, who by *Him* are *regenerated* (baptized!) *unto God*." We find, consequently, that the word *regenerated* here cannot be synonymous with *baptized*.

#### TESTIMONIES.

DR. HAGENBACH: "Nor does the earliest passage occurring in the writings of the Fathers (Irenæus adv. Hær. ii. 22, 4) afford any decisive proof. It only ex-

\* Christian Review, vol. 3, p. 206.



presses the beautiful idea, that Jesus was Redeemer in every stage of life, and *for* every stage of life; but it does not say that He redeemed children *by the waters of baptism*, unless the term *renasci* be interpreted, by the most arbitrary *petitio principii*, to refer to baptism.\*

RÖSSLER: "All the arguments put *together* do not prove that to be *regenerated to God*" (in this passage of Irenæus) "means to be *baptized*."†

With these testimonies agree Baumgarten, Crusius, Viner, Starck, Munscher, Von Cöln, Krabbe, Böhringer‡—all celebrated divines among the Pedobaptists of Germany.

#### CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

This Father was born in the middle of the second century. The passage which has been adduced from his writings in favor of infant baptism, reads as follows:

"If any one be by trade a fisherman, he will do well to think of an Apostle, and the children taken out of the water."§

As this passage, among the Pedobaptists, now generally is given up as proving nothing, we wish only to make a few remarks.

In the book from which this passage is taken,

\* History of Doctrines, Elinburgh, 1846, vol. 4, p. 193.

† Library of the Christian Fathers, vol. 1, p. 11.

‡ Christian Review, vol. 3, p. 213.

§ Pedag. lib. 3, c. 11.

Clement represents Christ under the figure of a child's instructor, and all Christians as His children.

The word *children* here, consequently, is to be taken in a figurative sense, which is also the opinion of Neander, who says: "When one wishes to prove the existence of infant baptism from the above passage in Clemens Alexandrinus, which indeed has reference to baptism, this would hardly serve as an argument, for while the idea of *the Divine Child's instructor* stood before the eyes of Clement, he might call *all* Christians *children*. This passage undoubtedly speaks of the conversion and new birth with reference to all men."\*

Another passage of a greater extent in Clement, speaks by implication as strongly as that from Justin, previously quoted, *against* infant baptism,† which passage, however, our limits will not permit us to examine.

We find also, in the writings of Clement, an evidence that baptism at his time was administered by *immersion*. For he says: "Ye were conducted to a bath, just as Christ was carried to the grave, and were *thrice immersed*, to signify the three days of his burial."‡ Even in the passage first quoted, the words "taken out of the water" clearly allude to immersion.

\* Church History, vol. 1, p. 364.

† Pedag. lib. 1, c. 6. Ch. Rev., vol. 6, p. 311, *et. seq.*

‡ Mystagog. 2.

## TERTULLIAN.

Tertullian lived about the year A. D. 200. He is the first one who mentions the baptism of little children (yet not expressly of infants), and opposes it. In a writing directed against Quintilla, the leader of an heretical sect called Quintillians, *among whom the first traces of the existence of infant baptism are found*, he says, with respect to it chiefly, as follows: "Baptism is not to be given rashly. . . Therefore, according to each one's condition and character, as well as age, the delaying of baptism is more profitable, *especially in the case of little children*. Our Lord says, indeed: Do not forbid them to come to me. Therefore, *let them come when they are growing up, when they are instructed whither it is that they come; let them be made Christians when they can know Christ. . . . Let them know how to desire this salvation*, that you may appear to have given to one that asketh."\*

As to this passage, we wish only to quote the following

## TESTIMONIES.

NEANDER: "Tertullian evidently means that children should be led to Christ, by instructing them in Christianity; but that they should not receive baptism until, after having been sufficiently instructed, they are led from personal conviction, and by their own free choice, to seek for it, with sincere longings

\* Tertull. de Baptismo, c. 18.

of heart. . . . Soon after Irenæus, toward the close of the second century, Tertullian appears as a zealous opposer of infant baptism—a proof that it was not yet customary to regard this as an apostolic institution; for had it been so, he would hardly have ventured to oppose it so warmly. . . . For these reasons, Tertullian declared against infant baptism, which at that time was certainly *not a generally prevailing practice—was not yet regarded as an apostolic institution*. On the contrary, as the assertions of Tertullian render in the highest degree probable, it had *just begun to spread, and was therefore regarded by many as an innovation*.”\*

MATTHIES: “Tertullian—who, as every body knows, *labored with the utmost zeal to preserve every church institute as being of apostolic origin, yet vehemently opposes the practice of baptizing infants*; whence it is evident, that infant baptism had come into use, certainly in the Carthaginian church, and that it was *regarded as an institute which did not proceed from Christ nor the Apostles*. . . Since Tertullian was a very strenuous advocate of ecclesiastical tradition, and most unfriendly to changes, with the exception of Montanism, it is obvious that the custom of infant baptism was not yet, at that time, prevalent in all the churches.”\*

\* Church History, vol. 1, p. 312, Torrey's transl. Spirit of Tertull. p. 20.

† Expositio Baptismatis, pp. 191, 193.

VENEMA : "Tertullian dissuades from infant baptism, which he would not have done if it had been a tradition and a prevailing custom in the church, because *he adhered very closely to traditions* ; nor, had it have been a tradition, would he have failed to mention it. I conclude, therefore, that Pedobaptism *cannot be plainly proved* to have been practiced before the time of Tertullian, and that there were persons in his age who desired their infants might be baptized, which opinion Tertullian opposed, and by *so doing, intimates that Pedobaptism began to prevail.*"\*

As to the mode, Tertullian also affords an important testimony. He says : "We, like fishes, are born *in the water*, and are safe in continuing in it—that is, in the practice of immersion." . . . Again, "We are immersed three times, fulfilling somewhat more than our Lord has decreed in the Gospel." And again, "There is no difference whether one is washed in a sea or in a pool, in a river or in a fountain, in a lake or in a channel ; nor is there any difference between them whom John dipped (*tinxit*) in Jordan, and those whom Peter dipped in the Tiber."†

\* Hist. Eccles. tom. 3, seirel. 2, §§ 180, 109.

† De. Cor. Milit. c. 3. De Bapt. c. 4.

## SECTION IV.

### BAPTISM IN THE THIRD CENTURY.

ONLY two of the seven Fathers who lived in this century are considered to have given testimonies of the existence of infant baptism, viz., Origen and Cyprian.

#### ORIGEN.

This Father—born A. D. 185, and died A. D. 254—lived in Alexandria of Egypt. Three passages in his writings—viz., one in his Homilies on Leviticus, another in his Homilies on Luke, and the third in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans—have been quoted as decisive arguments in favor of infant baptism.

Before introducing the passages themselves, it ought to be observed that they do not exist in the language in which they were written by Origen, but only in the Latin, into which they were translated near the close of the fourth century, by the church Fathers, Jerome and Rufinus. These Fathers have taken such liberties with the Greek original by alterations, additions, and omissions, that they rather may be considered to have given a treatise than a

faithful translation of the writings of Origen. This clearly appears by comparing such passages in the writings of Origen as still exist in the Greek with the Latin translations. This both Jerome and Rufinus have themselves freely acknowledged, and that for their own credit, as the writings of Origen were considered to contain heretical sentiments.

The same is also testified by distinguished divines among Pedobaptists. Thus De la Rue, the editor of the Benedictine edition of the works of Origen, remarks, that we need not wonder if the writings of Origen contain indications of a later age, as they were translated by "*Jerome, whose usual manner, in translating Greek,*" he adds, "*the learned know to have been to insert occasionally some things of his own.*"\*

Likewise Dr. Redepenning, Theological Professor in Gottingen, in his celebrated work on Origen, says concerning the translation of Rufinus, "*His work is intermediate between a translation and a treatise—a reproduction adapted to the views and wants of the later age in which it was prepared.*"† And also the learned Erasmus, coeval with Luther, complains of the same translation, that the reader

\* See the preface to the edition of Origen's Works, above mentioned.

† "So ist sein Werk ein Mittlores Zwischen Übersetzung und Bearbeitung, eine Wiedererzeugung nach Massgabe der Ansichten und Bedürfnisse des späteren Jahrhunderts."—"Origines: Darstell. s. Lebens u. s. Lehre," vol. 2. p. 190.



is "uncertain whether he reads Origen or Rufinus."\*

After these remarks, from which it appears that the authority of the passages from the writings of Origen, in support of infant baptism, is dubious, we proceed to introduce the passages themselves, marking the more doubtful parts with brackets.

*Homily VIII., on Leviticus 12 : 1-8—according to Rufin's Latin version.*

"Hear David speaking : I was, says he, conceived in iniquity, and in sin did my mother bring me forth ; showing that every soul that is born in flesh is polluted with the filth of iniquity and sin, and that, therefore, that was said which we mentioned before, that *none is clean from pollution, though his life be but of the length of one day.* [To these considerations it can be added, that it may be inquired why, since the baptism of the church is given for the remission of sins, baptism is given according to the observance of the church even to children (*parvulis*) ; for the grace of baptism would seem superfluous, if there were nothing in children requiring remission and indulgence.]"

*Homily on Luke 2 : 21-24—according to Jerome's Latin version.*

"[Having occasion given in this place, I touch again upon what is frequently inquired about among

\* "Wall's History of Infant Baptism," part 1, ch. 5, § 6.

*the brethren.* Children are baptized for the remission of sins. Of what sins? or when have they sinned? or how can any reason of the laver in their case hold good, unless according to that sense, which we have just now mentioned. *None is free from pollution, though his life be but of the length of one day upon the earth.* And because, through the sacrament of baptism, the pollution of nativity is removed, therefore children (*parvuli*) also are baptized. For unless any one may be born of water and of the Spirit, he will not be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven.”]

*Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Book 5, 9—according to Rufin’s Latin version.*

“And also in the law, it is commanded that a sacrifice be offered for the child that is born; *a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, of which one is for a sin-offering, the other for a burnt-offering.* For what sin is this one pigeon offered? Can the new-born child have committed any sin? And yet it has sin, for which the sacrifice is commanded to be offered, and from which even he *whose life is but of one day* is denied to be free. Of this sin, therefore, David is to be supposed to have said that which we mentioned before. *In sin did my mother conceive me*; for no sin of his mother is affirmed in history. [For this also *the church has received a tradition from the Apostles to give baptism even to children (parvulis); for they to whom the secrets*

*of the divine mysteries were committed*, knew that in all persons there is the native pollution of sin, which must be done away by the water and the Spirit, on account of which pollution even the body itself is called the body of sin.]

If Jerome and Rufinus added the sentences included in brackets, they did only what was in accordance with their avowed manner in these translations, and they expressed themselves as they naturally would have done in the time and circumstances in which they lived. If we, however, suppose that the words in the above passages mentioning baptism of children actually come from Origen, they prove, in the first place, nothing more than that the usage of baptizing children existed in the time of Origen, or in the first half of the third century, which is an admitted point; secondly, that this was supposed to have the power of washing away original sin, or "the pollutions of our nativity;" and thirdly, that Origen declares the baptism of children for this end to have come from the Apostles. It is around this supposed or actual *declaration* of Origen the whole controversy turns. We shall therefore consider it the more carefully.

1. When it reads that "the church had received a tradition from the Apostles to give baptism even to children," etc., it is not asserted either that Christ himself, or any of his Apostles, had commanded infant baptism, but only that a tradition had been handed down from generation to genera-

tion, as from the Apostles, that baptism should be administered even to children. The Apostles gave no direction concerning the baptism of children in open terms. No! They to whom the secret things of the Divine mysteries were committed, knew, etc. Now we are able clearly to prove that such an opinion, even if held by Origen, must be erroneous.

For, according to the rule authorized in the ancient church: "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, (*What has been held always, everywhere, and by all*), was to be considered as an apostolical tradition. Origen had no right to call infant baptism an apostolical tradition. For it had been practiced neither always, nor everywhere, nor by all. Tertullian, a short time before, had opposed it, which he would not have done if it had generally been received as an apostolical institution, as he was an ardent defender of such usages as were considered to have an apostolic origin; and even in Origen's time, according to Neander, "difficulties were frequently urged against infant baptism, similar to those thrown out by Tertullian.\* Again, we not only have no evidence of its existence in the church the first hundred years after the Apostles, but, on the other hand, decisive evidence against it, both from Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria. And finally, even the very words, as quoted above from the writings of Origen

\* Neander's History of the Christian Church, vol. i. p. 314.

in support of infant baptism, show that it was a new thing, full of perplexity to thoughtful Christians who found no law, example, or explanation of it in the word of God; for they say that it was a thing "upon what was frequently inquired about among the brethren."

Besides, it is worthy of notice, that neither Tertullian nor Cyprian—who both lived almost at the same time with Origen, were strenuous defenders of the authority of tradition, and treated the subject of infant baptism as a matter of controversy—anywhere in their writings make any allusion whatever to an apostolical tradition in favor of infant baptism. Is it possible that these Fathers of tradition could have overlooked so important a point? As Tertullian devised the method of meeting the heretics with the authority of tradition, would his opponents have spared him if these weapons of his own could have been employed against him?

But there is a still stronger bearing of this argument. Several practices, which are admitted by all Protestants to have been abuses, were generally received in the church before Origen's time, and expressly defended on the authority of apostolic tradition. And they came under the rule, practiced always, everywhere, and by all. That is, they were universally practiced, no one calling them in question, and they came down from preceding time, as apostolical practices. Such were the customs, at baptism, of exorcising the devil from the candidate,

smearing him with oil, giving him salt, milk, and honey, clothing him in a white robe, and crowning him with evergreen; after baptism, of abstaining a whole week from bathing, which else was done daily; the custom of not kneeling on Sundays, etc.\* These practices, now rejected as innovations, and some of them as papistic corruptions, were established in the church as having descended by tradition from the Apostles, before infant baptism makes any appearance in history. And the fact that Tertulian defended these practices with the apostolical tradition, while he opposed infant baptism, is a strong proof that infant baptism could not be defended as an apostolical tradition in that age of the church, and that it consequently was an innovation.

Hence it appears that even if it could be proved that infant baptism, in the time of Origen, was *generally received* as an apostolic tradition, that would be no more conclusive as an argument for it, than it is for the other numerous abuses at that period generally received in the church as apostolical traditions.

But since it is evident that infant baptism was not generally considered as an apostolical tradition, if the passage in the works of Origen quoted in defense of the apostolical origin of infant baptism actually belongs to Origen, and if it means to say that the church had received a tradition from the

\* Wall's "History of Infant Baptism," part ii. ch. 9, sec. 4.



Apostles to give baptism even to new-born children, then this statement must be placed among the many other erroneous opinions of Origen.

This is the conclusion of Neander, who testifies that Origen's "expression" concerning infant baptism "cannot be regarded as of much weight in this age, when the inclination was so strong to trace every institution, which was considered of special importance, to the Apostles, and when so many walls of separation, hindering the freedom of prospect, had already been set up between this and the apostolic age."\*

2. But this passage does not even speak of new-born children. The word *parvuli*, signifying those children to whom baptism, according to the tradition of the church, should be given, is elsewhere in the writings of Origen generally used to designate that part of childhood which is subsequent to the years of discretion. Thus, for instance, in Homily XIX. of Luke, where Jesus, when at the age of twelve he went up to Jerusalem, is repeatedly called *parrulus*. If it be objected that the reason assigned why children were to be baptized, viz., their "native pollution of sin," is applicable to children from the time of their birth, and that therefore they should be baptized immediately upon their birth for the remission of sins, we answer that thus reasoned the subsequent Fathers, but not

\* "History of Christian Religion," vol. i. p. 314.



Origen. He taught that sin was not imputed to children till they came to the years of discretion, and that they then also are first capable of receiving the grace of Christ.\* Further, his writings contain no single passage where the baptism of unconscious babes is mentioned;† but many passages showing that such a baptism found no room in the system of Origen. The following two passages may serve for instances.

In his work against Celsus, (book iii. ch. 59), a passage is quoted from Celsus, in which, after mentioning what intelligent and respectable persons are invited to initiation in the sacred mysteries among the heathen, this bitter adversary of Christianity proceeds thus: "And now let us hear what persons the Christians invite. Whoever, they say, is a sinner, whoever is unintelligent, whoever is a mere child, and, in short, whoever is a miserable and contemptible creature, the kingdom of God shall receive him." Origen then subjoins: "In reply to these accusations we say, It is one thing to invite those who are diseased in the soul to a healing, and it is another to invite the healthy to a knowledge and discernment of things more divine. And we, knowing the difference, first call men to be

\* See his Commentary on the Romans, book v. 2.

† The words occurring in the ninth Homily on Joshua, "*Et tu fuisti infans in baptismo*," (and thou wast a little child in baptism), do not allude to little children in age, but in the disposition of mind. See the "Christian Review," vol. xix. p. 195.

healed. We exhort sinners to come to the instruction that teaches them not to sin, and the unintelligent to come to that which produces in them understanding, and *the little children to rise in elevation of thought to the man*, and the miserable to come to a fortunate, or (what is more proper to say), a state of happiness. But when those of *the exhorted* that make progress show that they have been cleansed by the word, and, as much as possible, have lived a better life, THEN we invite them to be initiated among us."

To be initiated among the Christians, it is well known, was to be admitted to baptism and the Lord's Supper. In this passage the testimony of Origen is remarkably explicit. It needs no lengthened comment. The reader himself sees at once that the "little children," as well as the rest, were "exhorted" in a way adapted to their character; and "when those of the exhorted who make progress, show that they have been cleansed by the word, and as much as possible have lived a better life," then they are admitted to baptism. Celsus reproached the Christians for receiving to their fellowship certain classes of the population, and among them children. Origen replies triumphantly with express reference to each class, and states *when or on what condition* any are admitted.

Here we have Origen's own testimony, showing when children were to be baptized. It is worthy of notice that this testimony occurs among the few

remains of Origen's works that still exist in the original, the Greek, and that its authenticity, consequently, is undoubted. The natural conclusion, therefore, is that, if a passage in the writings of Origen that still exists in the original, and whose authenticity is undoubted, clearly shows that he could not have called *baptism of new-born children an apostolic tradition*, we ought never to quote in support of infant baptism another passage from his writings whose authenticity is doubtful, and where nothing is mentioned of baptism of *unconscious babes*.

Among the many passages occurring in the Latin translations of Origen, which directly or indirectly teach that children as well as adults were to be instructed, and to give evidence of having heeded the Christian instruction before they were baptized, we wish only to quote the following, occurring in Homily XII., on Numbers, section 4: "Let *each one* of the believers recall to mind what words he there used at that time, when he first came to the waters of baptism, when he received the first symbols of the faith, and approached the salutary fountain, and how he renounced the devil, that he would not use his pomps, nor his works, nor comply at all with any of his services and pleasures."

Here every one of the believers was expected to be able to remember the solemn scene of his baptism. And if *each* could *remember his own baptism*, and what he said and what he did at the time,

surely, he could not then have been a mere infant.

3. On this historical question, there is a most excellent and elaborate treatise by Ira Chase, D.D., in vol. xix. of *Christian Review*, April, 1854, from which we have selected a great deal of this article. And in conclusion, we take the liberty further to add the following remarks from the same treatise :

“ Now what we maintain is that, if Origen speaks, in the passages so often quoted as coming from him, in support of infant baptism, he ought to be understood as referring to the baptism of children of sufficient age to be conscious moral agents. . . . We have taken some pains to ascertain the truth. We have examined for ourselves the voluminous works of Origen, and we have become thoroughly convinced that the system of infant baptism adopted by subsequent ecclesiastical Fathers never entered his mind, although some of his speculations on the pollution connected with nativity, as well as the somewhat indefinite statements attributed to him, claiming the authority of apostolical tradition, may have greatly contributed, at a later period, to the establishment of that system.”

“ The term children,” (*parvuli*) “ was in itself indefinite. Various and strong influences, in the third and fourth centuries, were constantly tending to hasten the baptism of children, and make it strictly and literally *infant* baptism; so that we need not wonder if what Origen, or a reputed apos-

tolical constitution, had said with some indefiniteness respecting the baptism of children in the later portion of childhood, without precisely saying what children, soon came to be understood and used by many as sanctioning the baptism of children in their earliest infancy. Many words in the lapse of time have undergone a very considerable change of signification in consequence of change in the customs of the people.

“*Pedobaptism, in the most ancient sense of the word, the baptism of children capable of professing their faith in Christ, passed gradually, and in different countries more or less rapidly, though with comparative silence, into infant baptism in the more modern sense, the baptism of new-born babes.* For the most part, historical light in regard to the primitive churches shone but dimly. It is not strange, if even the acute and powerful Augustine sometimes has his vision obscured in the heat and dust of controversy. We are not at all surprised at the manner in which he, in the fifth century, used the word *parvulus*, while, with consummate skill and energy, he confirmed and made triumphant, in Africa and elsewhere, that system of *infant baptism* which, according to the most reliable evidence, *began* to be authoritatively established in that country by the ardent and popular Cyprian, about the middle of the third century.” So far Dr. Chase.

4. On this question a new light has also been

thrown through the recent discovery of a lost work of Hippolytus, Bishop of Portus, near Rome (198–236 after Christ). The result of this discovery is thus stated by the Prussian Minister, Chevalier Bunsen: “Pedobaptism in the more modern sense—meaning thereby the baptism of new-born infants with the vicarious promises of parents or sponsors—was utterly unknown in the early church, not only down to the end of the second, but indeed to the middle of the third century. . . . As in other cases, the origin was innocent, and I think that we are at this moment better able than the defenders or opposers of infant baptism hitherto have been, to explain how it originated. A passage in our Alexandrian church-book gives the true explanation of the assertion of Origen, himself an Alexandrian, that the baptism of children was an apostolical tradition, and it *removes* the origin of infant baptism from Tertullian and Hippolytus to the end of our present period—Cyprian being the first Father who, impelled by a fanatical enthusiasm, and assisted by a bad interpretation of the Old Testament, established it as a principle.” And again, in another passage, says Bunsen: “Tertullian’s opposition is to the baptism of *young growing children*, he does not say one word about new-born infants. *Neither does Origen, when his expressions are accurately weighed.*”\*

\* “Hippolytus and his Age,” London, 1852, vol. 3, pp. 180, 192, 195.

The celebrated Dr. Kitto, in his *Journal of Sacred Literature*,



## CYPRIAN.

The next church Father whose writings treat on the subject of Baptism is Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, in North Africa, about the middle of the third century. In the year 253, a Council convened at Carthage to consult on various questions of doctrine and discipline. Among other matters, a country bishop, Fidus, proposed the question whether it were lawful to baptize infants immediately upon their birth, or whether baptism might not always be deferred to the eighth day, as in the case of circumcision? The answer given by the Council on this question is inserted in the writings of Cyprian, and contains chiefly the following points :

Baptism was to be given to infants immediately upon their birth. 1. "Because the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." 2. Because, "as far as lies in us, no soul is to be lost." 3. Because "the Scriptures teach the equality of infants and adults in respect to the divine gifts. This is proved by the circumstance that the prophet Elisha, in his prayer to God, stretched himself on the infant son of the Shunamite woman, that lay dead, in such manner that his head, and face, and

has given the weight of his authority to the same conclusion ; and the North British Review has frankly confessed that "the correctness of the picture of ancient baptism given by Bunsen, will, we apprehend, not be disputed by any man, who is content to accept the mere fact of the case."



limbs, and feet, were applied to the head, face, limbs, and feet of the child, which signified a spiritual equality, that all men are equal, when they are once made by God.”(!) 4. Therefore, “none was to be hindered from baptism and the grace of God”—least of all “infants, persons newly born, to whom our help and the divine mercy is rather to be granted, because by their weeping and wailing at their first entrance into the world they do nothing else but supplicate it.” 5. As to the scruple of giving the new-born child the *kiss of brotherhood* after baptism,\* because it was considered legally unclean the first days after birth, that this “ought not to hinder the giving to it the heavenly grace. For it is written, To the clean all things are clean; and Peter said: The Lord has shown me that no person is to be called common or unclean.” 6. “In the New Testament it was not necessary to baptize children on the eighth day, for the eighth day of the Jewish circumcision was a type of the Christian Sabbath, which type ceased when the substance was come.”\*

Such were the principles on which the Fathers at that Council established the baptism of new-born children in Carthage and its vicinity—at least where there was immediate danger of death. Not

\* An ancient custom, which it was thought necessary to observe.

† See the original in “Wall’s History of Infant Baptism,” part 1, ch. 6, § 1.

a word is mentioned of any direction of the Lord or the Apostles concerning either infant baptism itself, or any circumstances connected therewith; no allusion is made to any example of the Apostles; not a word of any apostolical tradition concerning either infant baptism itself, or the special case now in question. Can, therefore, any enlightened Christian imagine that, if infant baptism from the beginning had been considered as an apostolic rite, the decision of this Council concerning it would not have been grounded on other and better arguments than these? Would there not have been at least an allusion to the order pursued by the Apostles in the case?

There is another circumstance here fatal to infant baptism; it is *infant communion*, or the custom of administering the Lord's Supper to infants, which is also mentioned in the writings of Cyprian. If it, therefore, is asked how it was possible for infant baptism, if it was indeed a corruption introduced subsequently to the age of the Apostles, to begin so early, become so universal, last so long, and leave no record of its origin, we answer that infant communion, which all admit to be a corruption, was introduced as early, grew up as silently, became as general, and lasted for about *a thousand years* in the Roman church, and is still existing in the whole Greek church. Infant baptism was at that time not only attended by this abuse, but at the same time also are mentioned sponsors, consecration of the baptismal water,

prayers and offerings for the dead, monkery and nunnery, as existing in the same churches. Already in Irenæus and Justin Martyr, we find traces of the worship of angels and the supremacy of Rome; in Cyprian, Tertullian, and Origen, are likewise found traces of the Pope's supremacy, the worship of the Virgin, of purgatory, etc.\*

#### TESTIMONIES.

NEANDER: "When now . . . . on the other hand, from the want of duly distinguishing between what is outward and what is inward in baptism—the baptism by water, and the baptism by the Spirit—the opinion became more firmly established, that without external baptism no one could be delivered from that inherent guilt, could be saved from the everlasting punishment that threatened him, or raised to eternal life; and when the notion of a magical influence, a charm connected with the sacraments, continually gained ground, the theory was finally evolved of the unconditional necessity of infant baptism. About the middle of the third century this theory was generally admitted in the North African church. . . . But while in theory the necessity of infant baptism was admitted, still in practice it was very far from being generally prevailing."†

\* Suiceri Thesaurus Eccl., tom. 1, pp. 653, 654; Neander's Ch. Hist., vol. 1, pp. 314, 315, 333, 646—vol. 2, pp. 319, 320; and Newman's "Theory of Development."

† Church Hist. vol 1, pp. 313, 314—Torrey's translation.

RHEINWALD: "*The first traces* of infant baptism are found in the Western church after the middle of the second century, and it was the subject of controversy in proconsular Africa toward the end of this century. Though its necessity was asserted in Africa and Egypt in the beginning of the third century, it was, even to the end of the fourth century, by no means universally observed—least of all in the Eastern church. Notwithstanding the recommendation of it by Fathers, it never became a general ecclesiastical institution till the age of Augustine."\*

GUERICKE: "Already in the third century the necessity of infant baptism was in theory pretty commonly acknowledged, but it was not until about the middle of the fifth century that the exhortations to its observance, given by the most distinguished church teachers, led, with the greatest difficulty, to its being carried out in practice in the East."†

DODDRIDGE: "Cyprian is allowed by all to speak expressly of infant baptism as generally used in the church; but it is justly answered, that he speaks as expressly of infant communion in the Eucharist, and that, consequently, the divine original of the *latter* may as well be argued from him as that of the former, yet almost all Pedobaptists allow that to be an innovation."‡

\* Chr. Review, vol. 3, p. 193.

† Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte, 6te auf., 1 b., s. 356.

‡ Miscell. Works, p. 494.

## SECTION V.

### BAPTISM IN THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.

THAT infant baptism has not an apostolic origin, is further evident from its very gradual introduction into the Catholic church. For while it seems to have been prevailing in the North African church, in the middle of the third century, we have sufficient evidence that it cannot have been generally practiced in the Greek church until *over a hundred years after*. For Gregory Nazianzen, who was Archbishop of Constantinople, and in his time enjoyed the greatest authority of any man in all Christendom, shows in an oration, delivered in the cathedral of Constantinople about the year A. D. 360, that infant baptism in the Greek church was not yet received as a general custom. He writes, "But, say some, what is your opinion of infants who are not capable of judging either of the grace of baptism, or of the damage sustained by the want of it; shall we baptize *them*, too? By all means, if there be any apparent danger. For it were better they were sanctified without their knowing it, than that they should die without being sealed and initi-

ated. *As for others*, I give my opinion, that *when they are three years of age or thereabout* (for then they are able to hear and answer some of the mystical words, and although they do not fully understand, they may receive impressions), they may be sanctified both soul and body by the great mystery of initiation.”\*

This needs no comment. It shows most clearly that infant baptism in the *Greek* church at this time was a *new* affair, unsettled by law, human or divine, and that baptism of new-born children was yet far from being there a general practice.

A similar testimony is also given by *Basil the Great*, Bishop of Cæsarea, who, in a speech to his catechumens about the year 375, expresses himself thus: “Do you demur, and loiter, and put off? *When you have been from a child catechised in the word*, are you not yet come to the knowledge of it? A seeker all your life long! A considerer till you are old! When will you be made a Christian? When shall we see you become one of us? Last year you were for staying till this year, and now you have a mind to stay till next. Take heed that by promising yourself a longer life you do not quite miss of your hope. You do not know what change to-morrow may bring.†

This passage, too, shows evidently that infant

\* Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bapt., part 1, ch. 11, § 7.

† Ibid., part 1, ch. 12, §§ 3, 4.

baptism was far from being general at the end of the fourth century. For notwithstanding the opinion of Dr. Wall, that the hearers of Basil were children not of Christians, but of unbaptized heathens, it is yet evident that a part at least were the children of Christians. For else how could he say, "*You have been* from a child catechised in the word." Did pagans so bring up their children? Did they teach them that the Bible was the Book of God? Did they introduce them to a Saviour in whom they did not believe. Further, it is to be observed, that this speech was delivered seventy years after the accession of Constantine. This passage from Basil, therefore, is alone sufficient to show that in *the fourth century* infant baptism was by no means general.

The very gradual introduction of infant baptism is further proved by the fact, that no evidence appears that any of the distinguished church teachers of this period were baptized in infancy. Indeed, there is evidence that several of them were *not*, though born of Christian parents. *Gregory Nazianzen*, born of Christian parents, was not baptized till at the age of thirty, at the time when his father was elected bishop. The parents and grandparents of Basil the Great were persons of most distinguished piety, yet he was not baptized in infancy. He was baptized at an advanced age, and ordained by the same man—his predecessor as bishop. The parents of Chrysostom were also



Christians at his birth, and he was educated by Miletus, a bishop, yet he was not baptized till twenty-one. Jerome, likewise born of Christian parents, was baptized at the age of thirty-one, etc.\*

Pelagius has been appealed to as a witness of great moment in favor of infant baptism, because, in a letter to Bishop Zozimus, of Rome, he is said to have declared, that he "never had heard of any, not even the most impious heretic, who denied the baptism of infants." This testimony, however, is not worthy of any attention, in the first place, because the passage quoted in the original is indistinct, and has been subject to various interpretations;† and secondly, because such a declaration would contradict all historical truth. For several heretical sects, earlier and contemporary with Pelagius, denied *all baptism*, and of course denied the baptism of infants. And many orthodox sects who held to baptism, denied it to infants. Tertullian, as has been shown, was opposed to it. And Neander shows that "similar difficulties," as those of Tertullian, were urged against it in Origen's time. Julian, who belonged to the party of Pelagius, says: "I have written against those who suppose baptism not needful for children." The Council of Carthage, 418, at which

\* Wall, part 2, ch. 3; comp. Chr. Review, vol. 13, pp. 216, 218; Grotius Comment. on Matt. xix. 14.

† The words in the original are as follows: "Numquam se vel impium aliquem hereticum audisse qui hoc quod proposuit de parvulis diceret."—Wall, part 1, ch. 19, § 30.

Augustine was present, decreed : "Whoever denies that children just born are to be baptized, let him be anathema." Was this curse hurled at nobody? Augustine says : "Men are accustomed to ask of what benefit is baptism to infants?" Chrysostom complained that most persons neglected to baptize their children ; Jerome speaks of those who *refused* to give baptism to their children, etc.\* Under such circumstances, how is it possible that such an utterance as is ascribed to Pelagius can be of any weight as an evidence for infant baptism ?

We now arrive at Augustine, the chief defender and promoter of infant baptism in his time. This man more than once declares infant baptism to be a rite descended from the Apostles. But how little this assertion is to be relied on, appears from the fact that such men as Wiggers and Neander, who have closely investigated the whole history from the original sources concerning Augustine and his contemporaries, do not hesitate to pronounce it an unfounded assumption ; and that Augustine also, with the apostolic tradition, seeks to prove the necessity of administering the Lord's Supper to infants. This may be seen in the following passage quoted by Dr. Wall : "The Christians of Africa do well call baptism itself, one's salvation, and the sacrament of Christ's body, one's life. From whence is this but, as I suppose, from that ancient and apostolical tra-

\* See on all this, Wall, part 2, ch. 5 ; Wigger's *Augustinism and Pelagianism*, pp. 65, 171 ; *Chr. Review*, vol. 3, p. 216.

dition, by which the churches of Christ do naturally hold that without baptism and partaking of the Lord's table, *no one* can come either to the kingdom of God, or to salvation and eternal life? If, then, neither salvation nor eternal life is to be hoped for by any *without baptism and the body and blood of our Lord*, it is in vain promised to *infants* without them."\*

As a misunderstanding of those words of Christ, "Except a man be born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," seems to have introduced infant baptism into the Christian church; so from a like mistake of those other words of Christ, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you," the participation of the Lord's Supper was supposed to be necessary to eternal life.

On this latter passage Augustine says: "Let us hear the Lord, I say, who is not now speaking of the sacrament of the holy laver, but of the sacrament of His holy table, to which none may regularly approach before he is baptized; 'Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, you shall have no life in you.' What would you have more? What answer can any one make to this, unless he will pertinaciously set himself to fight against the utmost evidence of truth? Will any man dare to say this passage belongs not to infants, and that they may

have life in themselves without the participation of Christ's body and blood."\*

In another place, Augustine endeavors to prove that infants cannot be saved without baptism, because till they are baptized they cannot partake of the Lord's Supper; and Christ says, None can have life in them, except they eat his flesh and drink his blood. For when he speaks of his opposers he thus expresses himself: "But if they have any deference for the apostolic seat, or rather, for the Lord and Master of the Apostles, who says, that none shall have life in themselves, unless they eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, which they cannot do without being baptized, they will one day confess that infants unbaptized cannot have life."†

From hence we perceive that infant communion, at the time of Augustine, was considered as necessary, if not more indispensable to salvation than infant baptism. And undoubtedly they had just as good reason to give the Lord's Supper to infants as baptism. (See pp. 148, 149.)

In the time of Augustine, care was taken that infant baptism, by synodal decrees, should be generally received as a legitimate rite in the Catholic or established church. In the year 416, a Synod was held at Mileve of Africa, in which Augustine pre-

\* Aug. de Peccator. Meritis & Remiss. lib. 1, c. 20.

† Aug. contra Pelagianos, Epist. 106.

sided. At this synod the following decision was made with respect to infant baptism: "Also it is the pleasure of the bishops to order that whoever denieth that infants newly born of their mothers are to be baptized, or saith that baptism is administered for the remission of their own sins, but not on account of original sins derived from Adam, and to be expiated by the laver of regeneration, *be accursed.*"\*

Also in the year 418 a Council was held at Carthage, where the anathema was pronounced against the doctrine of the intermediate state (between condemnation and salvation, which doctrine some defended) of unbaptized children deceased, because no such thing could be conceived of as a middle place between the kingdom of God and condemnation. But "thereby," Neander remarks, "according to the decision of that Council, the denunciation of everlasting condemnation was pronounced on all unbaptized children—a consequence of the error shocking all human feeling."†

After these Councils, and a third General Council at Ephesus, A.D. 431, where the positions of Augustine were established as the general doctrine of the Catholic church, we find within that church no Tertullians opposing infant baptism, or Nazianzens counseling delay. Since the Emperors Theodosius and Honorius had enacted a law—A. D. 413—

\* Robinson's History of Baptism, p. 215.

† Gesch der Christl. Rel. u. Kirche, 2 b., 3 abth., s. 1523.

which forbade all *anabaptism* in the empire, under the penalty of death, we would hardly expect any Catholic churchman to be bold enough to impugn infant baptism. Similar sanguinary laws were in force wherever the Church of Rome had power in subsequent ages. Hence flowed the blood of myriads of Christian martyrs! Hence, too, the destruction of their schools and books! Hence, lastly, the odious calumnies heaped upon their names in all times!

But notwithstanding these sanguinary and desolating persecutions, there have been found in all ages, from that time to the Reformation, not only individual sincere disciples of Christ, but Christian churches that have been faithful to the truth, and have rejected the errors and abuses of the established church. Those have been known under various names, as Cathari or Novatianists, Luciferians, Aerians, Vigilantians, Paulicians, Paterines, Gundulphians, Albigenses, Lollards, the early Waldenses, etc., with whom we have found no trace of infant baptism, but much testimony on the contrary.

At the time of the Reformation a sect stood up which often has been confounded with the Baptists, viz., the Munsterian Anabaptists. That the Baptists of our time stand in no connection with those Anabaptists, must, however, be conceded by every one who is acquainted with the history of the Baptists. This also has lately been acknowledged by Merle D'Aubigné, author of the celebrated work,

“The History of the Reformation.” In the preface of this work he says: “There is an error concerning the Baptists that has misled many. They have imagined that the Anabaptists in the time of the Reformation and the Baptists of our days are the same. But they are two sects, both as to their doctrine and history, and are as different as possible.”

The Baptists of England descended from the old Lollards, who rejected infant baptism, and already in the year 1389, had spread so far in that country, that a great part of the English nation then was on their side. After the time of the Reformation, they were branded in England by the opprobrious appellation of “Anabaptists,” and often cruelly and murderously persecuted.

About the year 1630, the Baptists were transplanted from England to America, where they have rapidly increased, and number at present, together with their families, about six millions of souls. In this land infant baptism more and more falls into desuetude, even among the most pious Pedobaptists of the different denominations, and many modern Chrysostoms make in vain a loud complaint that “most persons neglect to baptize their infants.” This is a natural consequence of a more intimate and general acquaintance with the doctrines of the Bible.

The history of the Church, too, furnishes the most incontestible evidence that as infant baptism



made a more prominent figure in proportion as the church grew more benighted and corrupted, so it has, on the other hand, since the time of the Reformation, in spite of every effort to maintain it, lost its hold and fallen into disuse in proportion as the pure doctrines of the Bible and true piety have gained a footing among professors of Christianity. This is the case especially where no privileged and oppressing State Church, with its hierarchy, allurements, and rewards, on the one hand, or threatenings and punishments on the other, have extended a blinding and corrupting influence over the minds of the people, but every one has been left entirely free and unbiased to follow his own convictions, grounded only on the Bible.

## SECTION VI.

### TESTIMONY OF CHURCH HISTORY WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

WE hope that every one who has attentively and without prejudice examined the testimony of the New Testament on the mode of baptism, has already found that all the baptisms mentioned in the New Testament, were administered by immersion. We have likewise found that several of the church Fathers, as Justin Martyr, (p. 219), Clement of Alexandria, (p. 227), Tertullian, (p. 229), Jerome, (p. 41), and Cyril of Jerusalem, (p. 121), have left a unanimous and decisive testimony, that immersion was the generally received custom of the primitive church. It would be a superfluous, as well as an endless undertaking, to quote all the testimonies from the Fathers which testify the same, while *no* testimony can be adduced speaking of any other mode until the middle of the third century.\* And the instance of a different mode then occurring is of a nature that only serves to establish the truth that immersion was the mode pre-

\* Wall, part 2, ch. ix. sec 2.

scribed by our Lord. That instance is stated in a letter by the church historian, Eusebius, where it is related that Novatian was baptized on his bed, because he thought himself to be near to death. The narrative of this case reads thus: "Who received [baptism] being poured round (*perikytheis*) on the bed on which he lay; if, indeed, it is proper to say that such a one could receive [baptism]." It is worthy of notice that it is here questioned whether this could be called baptism, which doubt is only an echo of the prevailing sentiment of this time. For in the same letter it reads further:—"Since he had received baptism, he obtained the rank of the presbytery by the favor of the bishop, who by the imposition of hands initiated him as presbyter. Since he had been denied [the initiation] by *the whole clergy and many of the laity—because it was not lawful for any one that had been poured round (perikytheis) in his bed because of sickness, as he had been, to be admitted to any office of the clergy—the bishop asked for permission to initiate this person only.*"\*

To this passage there is a note of Valesius, editor of the Ancient Ecclesiastical Historians, on the word (*perikytheis*), reading thus: "Rufinus rightly translated this *perfusum*, (*poured about*). For those who were sick were baptized in bed, since they could not be *immersed* by the priest,

\* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. cap. 43.

they were only poured about (*perfundebantur*) with water.”\*

Nothing can be more striking as evidence that immersion was deemed the only legitimate baptism except in cases of the greatest emergency, than the expression used by Eusebius—*perikytheis—poured about*—clearly an application of water to the body generally, and not to the face only. This mode was adopted in order to render the baptism in question as effectual and valid as possible, the body being, as in immersion, on all sides surrounded with water.

All other exceptions occurring in ancient times are upon the principle of danger of death, or other absolute necessity, and do therefore but confirm the rule. When the belief was prevalent that man could not escape the fire of hell in any other way than by water baptism, it was quite natural that men should try in any possible way to apply the water to the body, at the same time reciting the formula of baptism. But the fact that in ancient times they were not contented with sprinkling in the face or pouring on the head, but poured water all over the body, goes far to prove the primitive and only true mode of baptism to have been immersion. Yet this “necessity-baptism” of the Fathers, enforced from fear of hell-fire, has caused primitive baptism to be entirely abolished throughout the greatest part of Christendom.

\* Annot. in loco.

Except in such an absolute necessity or imminent danger of death, we have an unbroken chain of evidence showing that baptism for thirteen hundred years was performed by immersion, and by immersion only. Never and nowhere in Christendom was sprinkling or pouring allowed in ordinary cases, until the Council of Ravenna, assembled by the Pope in 1311; and not earlier than in the sixteenth century was pouring received as the general custom of the Roman church, which is clearly proved by the rituals of that church. At the same period, pouring and sprinkling also began to be received in the Lutheran and Reformed churches.

Yet, even at the present time immersion continues to prevail, as the only true mode, in the whole Greek church—containing about sixty millions of Christians—and in many other denominations over which the Papacy has not exerted its influence. With respect to the views of the Greek church concerning the necessity of immersion, *P. Ricaut, Esq.*, observes:

“Thrice dipping or plunging this church holds to be as necessary to the form of baptism as water to the matter.\* In the East there are, besides, various religious communities, which in consequence of an early secession from the established church, are connected neither with the Greek or the Roman church, as the Nestorians, Armenians, Jacobites,

\* Ricaut's “Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches,” p. 16.

Christians in Asia, Georgians, African Jacobites, Copts, and Abyssinians, who all yet observe immersion as the invariable and necessary custom.

#### TESTIMONIES.

DR. PHILIP SCHAFF: "As to the outward mode of administering this ordinance, *immersion*, and not sprinkling, was unquestionably the original normal form. This is shown by the very meaning of the Greek words *baptizo*, *baptismō*, *baptismos*, used to designate the rite. Then again, by the analogy of the baptism of John, which was performed *in* the Jordan, (*en*, Matt. iii. 6, *compare* v. 16;) also, *eis ton Jordanen*, Mark i. 9. Furthermore, by the New Testament comparisons of baptism with the passage through the Red Sea, (1 Cor. x. 12;) with the Flood, (1 Pet. iii. 21;) with a bath, (Eph. v. 26; Tit. iii. 5;) with a burial and a resurrection, (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12). Finally, by the general usage of the ecclesiastical antiquity, which was always immersion, (as it is to this day in the Oriental, and also the Græco-Russian churches;) pouring and sprinkling being substituted only in cases of urgent necessity, such as sickness and approaching death. Indeed, some would not even allow even this *baptismus clinicorum*, (baptism of bedridden), as it was called, to be valid baptism; and Cyprian himself, in the third century, ventured to defend the aspersion only in case of *necessitas cogens*, (cogent necessity), and

with reference to a special *indulgentia Dei*, (Divine indulgence.) . . . Not till the end of the thirteenth century did sprinkling become the rule, and immersion the exception; partly from the gradual decrease in the number of adult baptisms, partly from considerations of health and convenience, all children having now come to be treated as *infirm*.\*

DR. WALL: "The Greek church in all its branches baptizes by *immersion*. And thus do *all* other Christians in the world except the Latins. All those nations of Christians that do now, or formerly did submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome, do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring or sprinkling. And though the English received not this custom till after the decay of popery, yet they have since received it from such neighbor nations as had begun it in the times of the pope's power. But all other Christians in the world, who never owned the pope's usurped power, do, and ever did, dip their infants in the ordinary way. . . . All the Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one-third part of Europe, are of the last sort, in which third part are comprehended the Christians of Græcia, Thracia, Servia, Bulgaria, Wallachia, Moldavia, Russia, etc., and even the Muscovites, who, if coldness of the country will

\* History of the Apostolic Church, by Phil. Schaff: New York, 1853, p. 568.



excuse, might plead for a dispensation with the most reason of any.”\*

BISHOP BOSSUET: “We are able to make it appear, by the acts of Councils, and by the ancient rituals, that for *thirteen hundred years* baptism was thus (by immersion) administered throughout the whole church as far as possible.”†

STACKHOUSE: “Several authors have shown and proved that this immersion continued as much as possible to be used for *thirteen hundred years* after Christ.”‡

See also the testimony of Dr. Whitby, p. 114. .

We think these historical testimonies on the mode sufficient for every one who will admit truth to his heart; and we now wish only, in view of these, to propose the following inquiries:

How came it to pass that the early Christian writers expressed the rite of baptism by such phrases as these: “Conducted to a bath, just as Christ was carried to the grave, and were *thrice immersed*,” (p. 229;) “*immerse in water*,” (p. 41, the note;) “*plunge into the waters and be baptized*, and *encompassed on all sides by the waters*,” (p. 121;) “*dip in Jordan, or dip in the Tiber*,” (p. 231)?

How came it to pass that the Fathers should name, as suitable places for baptizing, “a sea, a

\* Hist. of Inf. Bapt. part 2, ch. ix. § 2.

† In Stennet's Answer to Russon: London, 1704, p. 176.

‡ History of the Bible, p. 1234.

pool, a river, a fountain, a lake, a channel, the Jordan, the Tiber," and that the baptism may be administered alike "*in*" any of them? (See p. 231.)

How came it to pass that the whole Christian world, however afterward divided, uniformly observed immersion, (except in cases of the greatest necessity), for *thirteen hundred years* after Christ?

How comes it to pass that the Christians in Greece, who ought best to understand their own vernacular tongue, in which the New Testament was originally written, from the first introduction of the gospel into that country to the present time, have exclusively baptized by *immersion*, and that they "hold immersion to be as necessary to the form of baptism, as water to the matter"? (See pp. 267-269.)

Does not all this contain the strongest confirmation of the doctrine of the New Testament in regard to the true mode of baptism? And can any one, in view of the unanimous and unvaried testimonies concerning this mode which we have found both in the New Testament and church history, yet deny that our Lord and Saviour commanded in his holy commission that baptism *always* should be performed by *immersion*?

## PART III.

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### SOME OF THE MOST COMMON OBJECTIONS, BOTH WITH RESPECT TO THE MODE AND SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM, ANSWERED.

THOUGH we have endeavored, as clearly as possible, to hold forth the true Scripture doctrine on Christian Baptism, and meet the most important objections generally made against it, yet perhaps some would say: "There are some difficulties still to be removed, before I can be convinced of the truth of your doctrine."

On this we would observe: There is no truth, however self-evident, about which difficulties cannot be raised. Men have made objections even to the reality of their own existence, in spite of the testimony of their consciousness. To every one who has attentively accompanied us in the exhibition of the Scripture doctrine on the true Christian Baptism, but still feels objections against it, we therefore wish to say:—Take care that unwillingness to believe it, is not the difficulty in your

way. If men be governed by their prejudices and corrupt motives, the most evident things in the world are obscure, and an insincere mind may reason away, by a thousand cavils and objections, the obligation of even the clearest law. It is possible we may have suffered rooted prejudices of education, natural affections, custom, pride, worldly advantage, sloth, the fear of man, etc., to prevent free, impartial inquiry, or to give a bias to our minds while we are seeking after truth. And these sinful propensities and corrupt motives may in our hearts prevail unperceived to a certain extent from want of self-knowledge and close self-examination, even while we may be truly considered as faithful professors of religion, and sincerely follow our convictions. Let us, therefore, from our hearts pray to the Lord, that he may divest our minds of all prejudice, and make our purpose faithfully to follow his known will, sincere and firm. Then we shall know the truth concerning Christian Baptism—a truth in itself so clear that a *little child* may understand it.

It ought to be remembered that the commission of Christ concerning baptism is a positive law, plainly expressed, and peculiar to the New Testament dispensation. We may, in our daily walk, meet moral duties, concerning which we have often with great difficulty to draw conclusions from a general moral law. But when a positive law is delivered to us, we have nothing to do but faith-

fully to obey it, both in its letter and spirit. (See pp 191-193.) Positive laws have for one special object, to serve as touchstones for our obedience. How insignificant soever this positive law might appear to us, or to our first parents, "Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die;" yet it was the touchstone of their obedience, and the violation of it brought the curse of the law on themselves and on all their posterity.

When Christ had finished his personal work on the earth, and was about to sit on his throne a "King of Kings," to reign till all enemies shall be put under his feet, (Ps. cx. i.) he said to his Apostles: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and disciple all nations, teach them my sovereignty, and show them the criminality of their rebellion, and the way of reconciliation. Go and tell them that he that believeth—that will submit to my authority and grace confidently, and will henceforth be my willing servant, and will prove the reality of his professed subjection by wearing the badge of my kingdom—tell him to go down with me in the symbolic grave of baptism, and thus publicly put me on before the world: and in so doing, he shall be saved." From that hour till the last trumpet sounds, the positive law of baptism is the prescribed criterion and touchstone of the faith and obedience of man. It is the declaration or oath of allegiance to Christ

as Kings; and is to those who rightly understand its nature as veritable a test of character before the world, as was the prohibition in the garden of Eden to our first parents. And hence we may infer the importance of strictly obeying our Lord's commission concerning baptism, both in regard to its subjects and mode, its spirit and design.

The overlooking of the distinction between positive and moral precepts, caused, to a great extent, the apostacy from Gospel truth, which from the ancient times to the present day has prevailed in the greatest part of Christendom, and changed it to a new heathenism. Instead of literally keeping to the express positive command of our Lord, false conclusions were drawn from misinterpreted passages of Scripture, and applied to baptism. Thus, for instance, in the absence of any positive command concerning baptism of infants, the ancient Fathers inferred, partly from the law of circumcision, and partly from John iii. 5, and Mark x. 13-16, the obligation of baptizing infants—the fallacy of which conclusion we have already seen.

After these remarks we proceed to meet several of the most common objections made against the true doctrine of Baptism, both with respect to its Mode and Subjects.

## SECTION I.

### OBJECTIONS CONCERNING THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

The objections made against the Mode of Baptism, as prescribed by our Lord and Saviour, are chiefly as follows :

FIRST OBJECTION. " Christ would not burden his disciples with inconvenient and burdensome rites ; but immersion would often be inconvenient, and sometimes impracticable."

ANSWER. As to the inconveniences attending the scriptural Mode of Baptism, those who practice this mode smile at the mention of them, knowing they exist only in the imagination of those who have never tested the value of their objection by experiment.

As to the allegation, that immersion in certain circumstances must be impracticable, a moment's reflection will satisfy a candid mind that little importance should be attached to it. As a matter of fact, immersion is practiced, at this day, in the coldest regions of Russia, and thousands of Baptists in other countries have often in severe winter coldness descended into the water of baptism, without suffering the least injury as to their health. And



if, against the common experience, the administration of baptism would endanger life, it must be postponed, or altogether omitted, as in the case of other duties. Whenever baptism is impracticable, as with the penitent thief on the cross, the positive command enjoining it ceases to be binding, and the privation of the privilege of being baptized must be referred to the providence of God, to which a spiritual mind will devoutly submit itself.

As to the feeble objection, that it must be troublesome and repulsive to the feelings of many to be immersed in the waters of baptism, we ask, Can the trouble be too great, and the cross too heavy, to one who indeed is convinced that our Lord and Saviour has sanctioned that mode, not only by His command, but by His own example? Who, as a Christian, if present on the banks of Jordan, when Christ was baptized, would refuse or object to be the next person to be baptized after Christ, and in the same way? And if *then*, when the Holy Spirit was visibly descending, and the Father's voice was heard, you would cheerfully have entered the stream of Jordan, is not the ordinance the same now—equally beautiful, equally binding, and as much under the eye and the blessing of Heaven? And if it indeed were a cross, we ask, Did not our Lord and Saviour bear a far heavier cross for you?

SECOND OBJECTION. “The practice of the Baptists, with respect to the Lord's Supper, is incon-

sistent with their strict adherence to their primitive mode of baptism; they do not observe the directions of Christ, with regard to the time, or the place, or the posture, of celebrating the ordinance of the Supper, nor do they use the same kind of bread nor of wine."

ANSWER. The command of our Lord, "*This* do ye in remembrance of me," had no reference whatever to the circumstances of celebrating the Lord's Supper; it referred to the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine in commemoration of His death, without any allusion to time, place, or manner. So in relation to baptism. Christ commands His followers to be baptized (*i. e.*, immersed) without reference to time, place, or manner. In each case, we are bound to do just what He has commanded. In the Lord's Supper we are commanded to partake of bread and wine, in grateful remembrance of Christ; in baptism we are commanded to be immersed on our own profession of faith in Him.

This objection is founded on the erroneous assumption, that immersion is only a circumstance of baptism, while it has been already shown that it is a part of the very nature of baptism itself. (See pp. 66-69.)

As a concluding answer to all the objections that may be raised against the true mode of baptism, we desire to record our deliberate and most serious conviction, that could all prepossessions and preju-

dices be laid aside, one would never for a moment doubt that immersion is prescribed by Christ, as *essential to the nature of Gospel baptism*; and even the most simple reader of the Bible could find his duty most clearly marked out in *the example of our Lord*, in *the practice of the Apostles*, and in *the allusions to baptism so often occurring in the Epistles*.

## SECTION II.

### OBJECTIONS CONCERNING THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

FIRST OBJECTION. "Should a doctrine and a practice which for all ages—evidently as far as from the middle of the second century—have been considered by the Christian church as holy and essential, be rejected? Can it be that the pious believing Fathers, the whole ancient church, the Reformers, and the churches grounded by them, together with all the churches and parties of recent time, consisting of sincere and pious Christians—can it be that all these have erred, and that the Baptists only have been orthodox?"

ANSWER. In the first place, this objection errs in matter of fact. Infant baptism, as we have seen, did not begin so early, nor spread so universally, for hundreds of years. And even then it was spread through the influence of the false doctrine of infant damnation and through a series of the most severe persecutions, kept up age after age, and staining the garments of the worldly church with the blood of martyred saints, and this too, even since the time of the Reformation. Even at this day infant baptism maintains its ground, not from the power of the truth, but chiefly from the corrupt union of the

Church and the State. This is evident from the fact, that in the United States of America, where perfect religious liberty is enjoyed, infant baptism has been given up by a great part of the population, six millions, or one-fourth of the whole nation having already embraced Baptist principles, mainly within the last fifty years: and the progress of inquiry is multiplying this number by thousands every year.

As for what remains, while we admit that the greatest part of professed Christians—including many men distinguished for piety and learning—are against us, we ask, Was a majority never wrong? Was not the same objection made against Luther and the Reformation commenced with him? Do not the Roman Catholics say at this day: "See how many and unanimous we are, but ye Protestants, how few and divided! How ancient are our doctrines and rites, but how recent are yours!" But what Protestant pays any attention to those objections of the Catholics? And as to pious and learned men and great names, such have in all times been found on the side of error. But let our opponents reckon them up by thousands, and place them all on the side of infant baptism; we will place on the other side our LORD JESUS CHRIST and His Apostles, and then appeal to our readers, Who have the highest authority?—though our number be but a little flock in comparison.

Now we must be allowed to insist upon it, that CHRIST and His Apostles are with us, evidently

sanctioning the immersion of believing disciples; but where is their sanction on the opposite side?

Baptism as a positive duty and an act of obedience to Christ, must have Christ's command.\* The Immersion of Believers only has this. If infant baptism in any respect were a duty, it, of course, must be the duty of the parents. But while the New Testament is full of circumstantial directions with regard to their duties, it contains not a single direction nor the least allusion to a duty of baptizing infants. Will any one yet say that he has an express command of God to baptize new-born children? If so be, in what book, or verse, or chapter of the Scripture can it be found?

When an infant is baptized the rite is performed expressly "in the NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." The administrator, therefore, *claims a Divine Authority* for what he does? But that authority has never been given. Infant baptism, then, must fall under the censure of that query: "Who hath required this at your hand?" To perform it in the name of the Holy Trinity, and yet without any authority from God, is indeed a serious act. Were any man to transact business in your name, as if doing it in your behalf and by your authority, while you had never said a word to him about the matter, you would think he was doing you

\* "Can that be obedience which has no command? Who knows what will please God but Himself? And has He not told us what He expects from us?"—*Richard Baxter.*

a serious wrong. How much more serious does the wrong become when men do that in the name of the LORD for which the Lord has given them no authority ! Let every administrator of religious ordinances pause and inquire, "Am I doing what my Lord has commanded me ? Were Jesus present to speak His will audibly now to me, would He command me to do what I am about to do ? Could I point Him to certain positive authority in His word which requires what I am about to perform ?"

SECOND OBJECTION. "I trust, after all, the baptism which I have received in my infancy is valid, inasmuch as the name of God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—has been mentioned over me in that baptism."

ANSWER. What is baptism according to the doctrine of Scripture ? Is it the affusion or sprinkling of a little water on a new-born, unconscious child, or is it the immersion in water of a believing disciple of Christ ? Between these two things there is, as we have seen, an essential difference—a difference as great as between day and night, between true worship and will worship. That the name of God has been pronounced over an infant, can just as little make this affusion or sprinkling a true Christian Baptism, as if you would undertake to sprinkle a sleeping person during the recital of the words of the baptismal formula. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord



will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

THIRD OBJECTION. "Then I must admit that I have not received a right water baptism, yet I have, I hope, received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is the thing signified; and I do not see the necessity of submitting to this rite, as I have received the thing signified, and water baptism cannot do me any good."

ANSWER. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is made, by the Apostle Peter, the very reason why those that received it should receive this ordinance. (See pp. 89, 90.) And as to the objection that baptism cannot do you any good, it may be observed: Though baptism itself, without faith, is of no avail, yet its observance, as the answer of a good conscience toward God by the believer, is of great use and blessing; for "in keeping the commandments of the Lord, there is a great reward." (Ps. xix. 11.) But even if receiving baptism could not afford you any advantage, what does your objection amount to? Is not your refusal an open declaration that you love yourself more than God? Thereby you do in fact say: "If baptism were an indispensable condition of my salvation, I love *myself* so much that I might take up that *cross*; but as it is not absolutely necessary for salvation, I do not love *my Saviour* so highly as to be willing to obey His commandment and follow His example." But we warn every one thus minded, that this is

high treason against Him who is called "Lord of Lords and King of Kings." Rev. xvii. 14. Surely this cannot be the language of a loving disciple of Christ! Not the language of a sinner who really believes that he is redeemed by "the precious blood" of Christ, the Son of God.

FOURTH OBJECTION. "I perceive, indeed, that according to the Commission I *ought* to be baptized; but Christ has not attached so great an importance to baptism, but that one may lay it aside as only an outward ceremony, in order to keep the great law of love, and I may, by contenting myself with my infant baptism, gain more influence and do more good for the kingdom of Christ, than by receiving the true baptism, whereby I would destroy my influence in the Christian community of which I am a member."

ANSWER. Beware lest a self-interested, self-willed, and God-forgetting Saul is couched under this plausible language. Saul, the King of Israel, was commanded by the Lord to "smite the Amalekites," and to spare nothing, neither wives, nor children, nor cattle. This command was plain and *positive*, and Saul so understood it. Yet, from motives undoubtedly plausible to himself, he spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, and the best of their cattle, but "every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly."

Now it is easy to perceive that Saul was a transgressor. Yet when, upon his return from the

battle, he met the prophet Samuel, he exclaimed : "Blessed be thou of the Lord ! I have performed the commandment of the Lord." Then Samuel inquired : "What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul replied that the people had spared the best of the cattle to sacrifice to the Lord. So the royal transgressor pleads his great regard for God's glory as a justification for his impious contempt for God's authority.

- The reply of the prophet was pertinent and instructive : "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in *obeying the voice of the Lord* ? Behold, to *obey* is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou has rejected the words of the Lord, he also has rejected thee from being king." (1 Sam. xv.)

May every one who is contented with a half obedience to the commands of the Lord, in order thereby better to promote his glory, take instruction and warning from this example. Surely OBEDIENCE *is better than sacrifice* ! For rebellion *is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*.

Be not, therefore, infatuated by the preconceived notion that you may be of greater use for the kingdom of God by trampling any divine precept under your feet, even if you, through your disobedience,

might deem yourself able to be an instrument for the conversion of the whole world, and on the other hand, though your obedience, should seem to yourself to shut every door of influence and usefulness against you. For what in such a case seems to you to be a gain for the kingdom of God, is in fact an injury, and what you consider to be an injury is a great gain. You can only see things present, but the all-seeing eye and the all-wise counsel of God extends throughout all eternity.

That baptism ought not to be undervalued as a mere "outward ceremony," we think we have already shown. Its value is to be measured not so much from the external act of baptism, as from the perfect wisdom and the positive command of him who is God over all, blessed forever. Were not the eating of the forbidden fruit, circumcision, the carrying of the ark on the shoulders of the Levites, etc., external acts? And yet how strict was the Lord in punishing the violation of his commands concerning these acts! But the Lord is now just as strict in requiring exact obedience to his positive commands as in ancient times. See, for instance, 1 Cor. xi. 29-32, where it is related that severe judgments, even of natural death, were inflicted on those of the Corinthian church who abused the Lord's Supper.

And now, dear Christian reader, if you have been brought to understand what constitutes true Christian Baptism, and that you have not yourself

been duly baptized, permit me, in behalf of Christ, to exhort you practically to attend to this sacred institution.

Do you ask, "What is prerequisite to baptism?" We answer, these three things :

To see and feel that you are a lost sinner, by God justly condemned, and that, before all things, you need the remission of sins. Acts ii. 37, 38.

To believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and rely on him as your *only* Saviour. Acts viii. 37.

To feel willing to forsake all ungodliness, and to devote your whole future life to the service and glory of your REDEEMER. Rom. vi. 2-13.

## APPENDIX.



### CHRISTIAN BAPTISM AS A PREREQUISITE TO CHURCH FELLOWSHIP AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

HAVING now found who are the proper subjects of Christian Baptism, and what is its mode, we desire also briefly to consider its relation to the other institutions and privileges of the Christian church.

This relation is established by the Commission of our Saviour, in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

This Commission prescribes, as we have seen, certain duties which are to be fulfilled in a certain order. The *first* duty is to preach the gospel, and thereby make disciples; the *second* to baptize the disciples; and the *third* to teach the baptized disciples to keep all the commandments of Christ. And it is just as clear that the second duty ought to precede the third, as that the first ought to precede the second.\*

\* That this is the order prescribed by Christ, will, if possible, be still more evident from the following example. Suppose a

The Apostles, and with them the ministers of the word in all times, should consequently not aim to fully instruct the disciples in the doctrine of Christ, until they have baptized them. The disciples in the school of Christ, which is his church, are to consist of only such as have been baptized on a credible confession of faith.

That baptism ought to precede church membership is a truth which needs no other proof than that contained in this Commission. For it does not only prove that baptism is to precede the instruction in *all* the commandments of Christ, but that it is *immediately* to be administered so soon as any one has become a disciple of Christ. (See pp. 43-47.)

A disciple of Christ, consequently, is forbidden to *defer* baptism,\* except in case of necessity, which

number of officers, in a great emergency, to have received from their sovereign the following commission: "Go and enlist all the able-bodied young men of the country as soldiers, receiving from them the oath of allegiance, and sending them to my regiments, in order to be trained in military exercises." Would it not be self-evident that the several duties—to enlist the young men as soldiers, receive from them the oath of allegiance, and send them to the regiments—ought to be fulfilled in the *same order* in which they were placed in the commission?

But the order of the several duties prescribed in the commission of Christ is not less evident. It is no otherwise than if he had said, "Go, and in the *first place* make disciples; *then* baptize them; and *at last*, teach them to keep all my commands."

\* It is in vain to object that the command concerning the administration of baptism *immediately* upon conversion is di-



suspends all laws, and meanwhile enter into church fellowship with those who are taught to keep "all things whatsoever Christ has commanded," which in fact would be a mockery of the commandments of Christ, since he requires from all his disciples, as the very best visible proof of obedience to his commands, to receive baptism.

In agreement with this Commission we find also that the Apostles urge baptism as the *first duty* to be observed after persons had manifested tokens of a true conversion. See especially pp. 70, 71, concerning the baptism on the day of Pentecost, and pp. 85-88, concerning the baptism of the Apostle Paul;—that the converts to Christianity were *always immediately* baptized after their conversion, see Acts x. 42-48; xvi. 13-15, 27-34; xviii. 3-8;—that in the Epistles it is taken for granted that all Christians were baptized; Rom. vi. 3-5; 1 Cor. i. 13; xii. 13; Gal. iii. 26, 27; Eph. iv. 5; Col. ii. 12; 1 Pet. iii. 21;—and that when Paul asks the disciples at Ephesus, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" (Acts xix. 3), he clearly intimates that no Christians in the Apostolic age *continued unbaptized*. He does not ask *if* they had been baptized, taking that for granted, but only *unto what* they were baptized.

rected to the administrator, but not to the subject of baptism. For if the administrator is commanded *immediately* to baptize, the new convert at the same time is thereby commanded *himself immediately* to be baptized.

Thus we here find, not only that all Christians in the apostolic age were baptized, but that the Apostles considered Christ's Commission concerning baptism so absolutely imperative, that the idea of a Christian remaining unbaptized could not so much as enter into their minds. And now, if the very express commandment of our Saviour, and the understanding of it by the Apostles, are to us of any importance, it must be conceded that baptism is made, by *divine appointment, a necessary prerequisite to church-membership.*

While baptism is quite commonly admitted to be a prerequisite to church-membership, a loud cry is heard against refusing to admit Pedobaptists to the Lord's Supper in Baptist churches. Baptists who refuse to admit pious Pedobaptists to the Supper in their churches, are charged with a superstitious adherence to preconceived notions, want of charity, etc. We wish, therefore, to notice, and briefly answer, some of the most common objections, especially against the scriptural prerequisites to communion at the Lord's Supper.

FIRST OBJECTION. "The Commission of Christ affords no evidence that the Supper is never to be received but by believers who are baptized. For if this Commission requires us to see that believers are invariably immersed, before they observe the Supper, it requires us also to see that they are immersed before they observe any other (?) of the 'all things' that Christ has commanded. But it

does not limit us to the immersed as the individuals whom we are to instruct in the observance of other commands. How, then, can it limit us to such persons as the only ones whom we are to teach to observe the command, "This do in remembrance of me?"\*

ANSWER. If the Commission does not limit us to the immersed as the only persons whom we are to instruct in the observance of some "other commands," yet it does, in fact, limit us to the baptized as the only persons whom we are to instruct in the observance of ALL the commandments of Christ. For it prescribes that only baptized disciples are to be taught to observe ALL things whatsoever Christ has commanded.

It has already been proved that baptism by Divine appointment, is made a prerequisite to church-membership. But a church member is subjected to special duties, not binding on unbaptized disciples of Christ, who have not yet been received into fellowship with the church. Therefore, though it may be right and proper to teach a believer before baptism to observe all such duties as are not especially enjoined on baptized church members; yet we are not authorized to receive him into the special school of Christ, which is the church, to place him under the pastoral care of the shepherd of the church,

\* See "Open Communion," etc. By S. W. Whitney, New York, 1853, p. 85.

and to teach or urge him to observe ALL the commandments which Christ has enjoined on those of His disciples who have been baptized and received into church fellowship.

That the command, "This do in remembrance of me," is among the special duties which only baptized disciples of Christ are to be taught or urged to observe, is proved from the fact that the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance, to be observed not without the church by one or more individuals, but *within a regular\* church of Christ, at its public services.*

This we learn from 1 Cor. x. 16–21. When it reads, v. 17, "For we being many are one body for we are *all*† partakers of that one bread," the Apostle evidently has his eye fixed on the *social* partaking of the Lord's Supper. Again, in vv. 20, 21, the Apostle means to say among other things: "As in the *social*‡ partaking in the Lord's Supper we are joined with Christians, so we are joined with idola-

\* We distinguish between *regular* and *irregular* Christian churches. Pedobaptist churches may justly be called *Christian* churches, in so far that they consist of believing professors of Christ, but they cannot be called *regular* or *orthodox* Christian churches, as they are not organized according to the commandment of Christ.

† "*Hoi pantes* (all) has reference to *partaking in common* of the one bread."—De Wette's Commentary on the passage.

‡ The phrase, "be partakers of the Lord's *table* (v. 21) has reference to a *social* repast; so even the word Supper (*deipnon*). See Matt. xxiii. 6; Mark vi. 21; Luke xiv. 16.

ters, if we partake with them in the heathen idol feasts.”\*

The same appears likewise from 1 Cor. xi. 20--33. For here the Apostle takes for granted that the Christians at Corinth “came together” to eat the Lord’s Supper—vv. 20--33.

He forbids them also to eat the Supper individually, and admonishes them to tarry “*one for another*,” vv. 21, 22, 33--3. When he asks, “Have you not houses to eat and drink in?” (v. 22) he intimates that while they could take their private repasts at home, they could not there eat the Lord’s Supper.

The only other passages of Scripture where the eating of the Lord’s Supper is mentioned, are Matt. xxvi. 20--29; Mark xiv. 22--24; Luke xxii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 42, 46; xx. 7, 11.

The two first-mentioned of these passages contain the report of the institution of the Supper. That the eleven disciples of our Lord on this occasion were all baptized, and constituted a Christian church, is indeed disputed by some, but without ground.

For when our Lord himself submitted to baptism in order to “fulfill all righteousness;” when He at

\* “Christians present at heathen sacrificial feasts, were considered by other heathens as persons favorable to their idolatrous religions; as those *who were present at the sacred feasts of the Christians* thereby declared publicly that they belonged to the society of Christians.”—Blomfield’s Annotations on the New Testament, on the passage.

the same time declared that His followers, together with Him, also ought to fulfill the same righteousness, or all the *several appointments* of the heavenly Father (see pp. 28, 29); when He, too, declared that baptism was a part of the "counsel of God," and expressed His sore displeasure with such as "rejected this counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized" of John (Luke vii. 30), when John the Baptist "was sent from God to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke i. 17; John i. vi.), and for this purpose "baptized with the baptism of repentance" (Acts xix. 4); when the *first* disciples of Christ also had been the disciples of John (John i. 37; Acts i. 22); and when they themselves, on the command of our Saviour, baptized others—is it indeed conceivable that they would have neglected or refused *to be baptized*?

That the eleven at the Institution of the Supper composed a Christian Church, is also certain. By a Church of Christ is meant, according to the Augsburg Confession, Art. 7th, "a congregation of holy persons, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered." Now we ask: Was not the Gospel rightly taught by our Lord and Master? Were not the disciples rightly baptized, and did they not receive the true Supper from its Institutor? As this cannot be denied, it follows that the Supper, even on this occasion, was



celebrated *in common* by a *regular* church of Christ.

In Acts ii. 42, it is said that "the breaking of bread," or the celebration of the Supper, took place among such as *after baptism* continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in "prayers." (See pp. 72, 74.) In v. 46, it is said that they were "breaking bread from house to house," etc. On these verses the celebrated Matthew Henry comments: "They broke bread from house to house; they did not think fit to celebrate the Eucharist in the Temple, for that was peculiar to the Christian institutes. They went from one to another of these little synagogues—houses that had churches in them, and there celebrated the Eucharist *with those that usually met there to worship God.*"

Here, consequently, we also find that the Lord's Supper was celebrated *in common* by a regular church of Christ.

Likewise "the disciples came together on the first day of the week" (the Sunday), "in Troas, to break bread." Acts xx. 7.

Now, when this is all that the Scripture contains concerning our subject, and when it thus, both by command, allusion and example, affords an irresistible evidence that the Supper is to be celebrated *only within a regular church of Christ, at its public services*; it follows that we are to consider the celebration of the Supper as one of the special duties contained among all the things which the disciples of



Christ were to be taught to observe after baptism ; inasmuch as only baptized Christians are entitled to membership in a regular church of Christ. Now then we also infer, that the Commission " requires us to see that believers are baptized," before they observe this command, " This do in remembrance of me."

Here we have, consequently, a double evidence for the truth that baptism is a prerequisite for communion at the Lord's Supper, viz., one, from the very Commission of Christ, and the other from apostolic doctrine and precedents agreeing with it.

SECOND OBJECTION. " In Scripture there is no express direction for refusing admittance to the Lord's Supper to unbaptized believers."

ANSWER. Neither is there any express direction forbidding Romanists to administer only bread to laymen at the Supper. Any such express direction is not needed. (See pp. 59-62.) We have a plain command to see that baptized persons only observe the Lord's Supper. This is a positive command, requiring a strict obedience. And the true meaning of this command, plain in itself, is confirmed by apostolic doctrine and precedents. We, therefore, consider ourselves as imperatively bound faithfully to follow the command, the instruction, and the examples set before us in the New Testament. It is incumbent on our dissenting brethren to prove that they have such a command, such an instruction, and such examples to justify their practice.

THIRD OBJECTION. "In Romans, xiv. 1-4, and xv. 7, we have an express direction to tolerate in the church all those diversities of opinion which are consistent with a state of salvation."

ANSWER. That it is the duty of Christians to tolerate some diversities of opinion, no one will question. But to receive into church fellowship, or admit to the Supper, *all* such as may be in a state of salvation, how much soever they may deviate from the sound doctrine of Christ, would, in fact, nullify the commandment of our Lord concerning baptism, the supper, and other institutions of the Christian church, and to introduce and propagate in it every description of fatal errors.

Among most of the erroneous sects in Christendom there are, undoubtedly, persons who are in a state of salvation, and yet cherish many of the errors of these sects. Now, if it were right to receive such erroneous brethren as members of an orthodox church, the natural consequence would be, in many cases, that through the mixture of erroneous with orthodox church members the true doctrine of the gospel, the true church ordinances, etc., would be abolished, and all shades of erroneous doctrines and fatal abuses again become predominant, as one or the other erroneous party, at times, might prevail. Thus the doctrine of purgatory, auricular confession, the prohibition of marriage, universal salvation, etc., would have just as full scope in the churches as the pure gospel

doctrine. Within the same church and at the same time, a new-born infant would be sprinkled or poured upon, and a believing disciple of Christ rightly baptized, and one part, at the Supper, partake only of bread, while the other part partook of both bread and wine. If the number of Pedobaptists chanced to prevail in the church, the true baptism must again be abolished, and infant baptism in its stead be exclusively practiced.

Again, if a number of Quakers became the majority, not only Baptism and the Supper, but even the whole ministry of the gospel would be abolished, and the public services would be limited to a mute silence, now and then interrupted by an occasional prayer of any individual, upon whom the Spirit might fall. For who could prevent all these things, if a majority voted in favor of them, and the minority were bound to "tolerate among themselves all the diversities of opinion which are consistent with a state of salvation"?

Again, to receive only occasionally all kinds of erroneous brethren as guests at the Lord's Table, would be an unauthorized inconsistency. For if it be right to admit such persons once to the Supper, it is as right to admit them at all times, and if they are good enough for the Lord's Table, they are as good for his church, especially as the Scripture most intimately connects the partaking of the Supper with church membership. "What God has joined together, let not man put asunder." "God

is not the author of confusion." "Let therefore all things be done decently and in order." Matt. xix. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40.

As to Romans, xiv. 1-4, this passage teaches only that Christians are to tolerate different opinions concerning things in themselves indifferent. The Apostle refers to such Christians as thought themselves bound to observe the statutes of the ceremonial law in respect to meat and drink and special days. Such persons, those more enlightened ought to treat with all tenderness as weak in faith, and in their behalf not even to eat flesh or to drink wine, etc., (vv. 15-21). And this they could do without any hesitation, as Christianity laid no stress on such things. For as the Apostle observes, (v. 17), "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

In the kingdom of Christ, circumcision and other such things as were contained in the ceremonial law, are "nothing." 1 Cor. vii. 19. Wherefore Jewish Christians, on account of their weakness, were also allowed to observe them, provided they did not make such things conditions of justification and salvation: in which latter case the Apostle most decidedly opposed it. See Acts xvi. 1-3, xxi. 20-27, compared with the Epistle to the Galatians.

The toleration enjoined in Romans xiv., consequently, refers only to the abrogated statutes of

the ceremonial law. With respect to these, every one was allowed to act according to his own conviction, inasmuch as they were in themselves indifferent things. See *vv.* 5, 6.

Thus, all that we may infer from this passage, is that we are to tolerate in our church such diversities of opinion as those mentioned in it. Mention any thing wherein the kingdom of God does not consist, and which in reference to Christianity is "nothing," and we are instantly ready, not only to tolerate different opinions about such things, but even ourselves to forego our own Christian liberty, in order "that our brethren may not stumble, or be offended, or made weak." *v.* 21.

But who dares to assert that even the least of the commandments of Christ is "nothing," (see *Matt. v. 19,*) or that his Commission concerning baptism does not constitute an essential part of that righteousness that is required in his kingdom? Did he not himself walk from Galilee to Judea in order to fulfill that righteousness? And did he not, at the same time, exhort all his followers also to fulfill the same righteousness? And can it be supposed that he would have prescribed laws for his church, destined to be invariably in force to the end of the world, and at the same time command his people to transgress or abolish those laws in deference to erroneous brethren?

To connive at a transgression of the law of Christ concerning baptism must in a high degree

render us partakers of other men's sins, (1 Tim. v. 22) ; for we must connive at what we consider as an overthrowing of the foundation of the visible church of Christ. It is evident that Pedobaptism has opened the door for the abominations of Papacy, and the church will never be restored to its primitive purity while she retains it. The grand cause of the corruption that has prevailed in the church was its being mingled with the world. Pedobaptism first occasioned this mixture, and national establishments of religion completed it. The former introduced the converted posterity of believers ; the latter all the inhabitants of the country. The former threw open the door to *all* ; the latter *broke down the walls*. Thus the church and the world have been confounded, and will always be confounded, more or less, till Pedobaptism is no more.

The admonition in Romans xv. 7, does not imply that Christians are to receive one another as guests at the Lord's table, while they differ as to the nature of gospel institutions, or that they are to receive one another into church fellowship without baptism. This passage only teaches that we are to receive one another so as Christ has received us. But Christ has received us into grace and adoption *through faith*, and into fellowship with his church *through baptism*, on a credible confession of vital faith in the gospel. And *in the same way* he also requires us to receive others. Whosoever gives a



a credible evidence that he is a genuine believer in Christ, him we receive into our Christian love as a brother, though he may be chargeable with several faults of his daily life, or such erroneous opinions as may be consistent with a state of salvation. If he is unbaptized, or not rightly baptized, we in the first place endeavor to convince him of the will of our Lord as to baptism. If he is not convinced of the evident injunction of Scripture concerning this essential institution of the church of Christ, or if he cherishes other errors perverting the Gospel of Christ, or subversive of his plain commands, we withdraw ourselves from him so far as not to form a more intimate or church fellowship with him as one walking disorderly. Yet we continue to love him as a Christian, and to admonish him as a brother. 2 Thess. iii. 6, 15.

If he, however, at the same time is a contentious person, seeking to disseminate such errors among others, we are required to reject him as a heretic, after the first and second admonition. Titus iii. 10. The same course we pursue, also, with respect to such members of our churches as continue to cherish or disseminate the same errors. For the retaining of such persons in church fellowship is neither right nor safe. See Rom. xvi. 17, 18; 1 Cor. v. 6; Gal. i. 6, 7; v. 9, 12; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 15; 1 Tim. vi. 3-5; 2 Tim. ii. 17-21; Tit. iii. 10; Rev. ii. 14, 15.

FOURTH OBJECTION. "In a series of duties, is the second to be omitted because the first has been



neglected? If, for example, any one in his early life has been disobedient to his father, is he therefore, in his more advanced age, at liberty to refuse compliance with his will?"

ANSWER. The supposed case is not applicable to our present subject. For with the neglect of the first duties of our life we lose forever the opportunity of performing them. But this is far from being the case with those who have not fulfilled the duty to be baptized, because they are always at liberty to perform this duty, which in the word of God is so plainly prescribed. If they, indeed, do not understand their preceding duty as to baptism, but yet with a good intention and in faith perform the subsequent duty as to the Supper, the Lord may bear with and forgive this disorderly conduct. Undoubtedly it is one of the "secret faults," for which they need to supplicate the forgiveness of God. Ps. xix. 13. When many of Israel had prepared their heart to seek God, but had not cleansed themselves, yet did eat the Passover otherwise than it was written, Hezekiah prayed for them, that the good Lord might pardon every one; and the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people." 2 Chr. xxx. 17, 20. It is well that the spiritual Israel has an Advocate for whose sake the Lord "healeth all their diseases." But as Hezekiah could not intend that his people, for whom he prayed to the Lord, should repeat their disorderly conduct, so our Advocate with the Father intends

not that we should continue in a conduct which He must ask His Heavenly Father to pardon. It is better to omit the performance of a *positive* duty, than to perform it contrary to the divinely prescribed order for its observance. Those who by the statutes of a church are forbidden to fulfill the commandment of Christ to drink the wine, would do better entirely to abstain from the Supper in that church, than to partake of it only in one species. Rev. xviii. 4. Thus, also, such as have not fulfilled the commandment of Christ concerning baptism, would do better to abstain from the Supper until lawfully baptized, than to partake of it as Israel of old did eat the Passover, "otherwise than it is written."

Finally, it may be observed that, how much soever the greatest part of the professed followers of Christ, in other respects, have been mistaken as to the New Testament doctrine on Baptism and the Lord's Supper, yet they have, both in their Confessions of Faith, and in the writings of the principal teachers of the church, as with one mouth in all times confessed, *that Baptism, by divine appointment, is made a prerequisite of Church Membership, and Communion at the Lord's Table.*

We quote a few examples in proof of this.

JUSTYN MARTYR, about A. D. 150: "This food is called by us the Eucharist, of which it is *not lawful* for any to partake, but such as believe the

things that are taught by us to be true, and have been *baptized*.”\*

AUGUSTINE: “Let us hear the Lord, who is not now speaking of the sacrament of the holy laver, but of the sacrament of His holy table, to which *none may regularly approach before he is baptized*.”†

DR. WALL: “No church ever gave the Communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained *that*, that any person should partake of the Communion before he was baptized.”‡

DR. DODDRIDGE: “It is certain, as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, *no unbaptized person received the Lord’s Supper*. How excellent soever any man’s character is, he must be baptized, before he can be looked upon as completely a member of the church of Christ.”§

DR. GRIFFIN remarks, in his letter on this subject, in 1829: “I agree with the advocates of close communion in two points. 1. That baptism is the initiating ordinance which introduces us into the visible Church; of course where there is no baptism there are no visible churches. 2. That we ought not to commune with those who are not baptized, and of course are not church members, even if we

\* *Apologia* 2da., p. 162, apud *Suicerum*.

† *Aug. de Peccator. Meritis et Remiss.* lib. 1, c. 20.

‡ *Hist. of Inf. Bapt.*, part 2, ch. 9.

§ *Lectures*, p. 510.

regard them as Christians. Should a pious Quaker so far depart from his principles as to wish to commune with me at the Lord's table, while he yet refused to be baptized, I could not receive him; because there is such a relationship established between the two ordinances, that I have no right to send the sacred elements out of the church."

Would that all those who profess themselves to be disciples of Christ, might rightly understand and faithfully keep His commandments. "*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.*" John viii. 31. "*Whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.*" 1 John ii. 5, 6.

THE END.















